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"IT WAS A DANCE OF POSTURE AND ATTITUDE—SLOW, GRACEFUL, AND QUIET"

THE REBEL QUEEN

A Novel

BY

WALTER BESANT,

AUTHOR OF

"ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN" "THE IVORY GATE"
"CHILDREN OF GIBEON" ETC., ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
PROLOGUE		
I.	THE SLAVE OF MAN	1
II.	UNDER THE LAMPLIGHT	14
CHAP.		
I.	THE GRAND REFUSAL	28
II.	AFTER THE PLAY	42
III.	AN EXPECTANT LOVER	51
IV.	A THING IMPOSSIBLE	57
V.	MR. ALDEBERT ANGELO	71
VI.	THEY COME LIKE SHADOWS, SO DEPART	80
VII.	THE ARM OF COINCIDENCE	88
VIII.	IN THE LABORATORY	102
IX.	THE COUSINS	116
X.	FORBIDDEN LOVE	131
XI.	THE "FRIEND OF LABOR"	146
XII.	THY NAME IS EVE	154
XIII.	WHAT WILL SHE DO WITH IT?	163
XIV.	AN EXPLANATION	169
XV.	"MY DREAMS PRESAGE SOME JOYFUL NEWS AT HAND"	180
XVI.	"BID ME DISCOURSE"	187
XVII.	"COME, MY BELOVED, TO MEET THE BRIDE"	195
XVIII.	SYNAGOGUE	202
XIX.	"SO, FRIEND, YOUR SLEEP WAS ALL YOUR HOUSE"	211
XX.	"GOOD OLD CHRONICLE"	220
XXI.	"I AM ASHAMED THAT WOMEN ARE SO SIMPLE"	232
XXII.	"FIE! FIE! HOW WAYWARD IS THIS FOOLISH LOVE!"	240
XXIII.	"BY THE GHETTO'S PLAGUE, BY THE GARB'S DISGRACE"	249
XXIV.	"TURN, FORTUNE, TURN THY WHEEL"	264
XXV.	"CHANGE INTO SOMETHING RICH AND STRANGE"	275
XXVI.	"TOUJOURS, TOUJOURS"	282

345713

CHAP.		PAGE
XXVII.	"GRIM-VISAGED WAR HATH SMOOTHED HIS WRINKLED FRONT"	291
XXVIII.	"ALLONS, ENFANTS DE LA PATRIE"	299
XXIX.	"IN DELAY THERE LIES NO PLENTY"	307
XXX.	"'TIS NOT STRANGE THAT EVEN OUR LOVES SHOULD WITH OUR FORTUNES CHANGE"	314
XXXI.	"THE SWEETEST THINGS TURN SOUREST BY THEIR DEEDS"	325
XXXII.	"GREATNESS KNOWS ITSELF"	333
XXXIII.	"WHO STEALS MY PURSE STEALS TRASH"	343
XXXIV.	"IN THE REPROOF OF CHANCE LIES THE TRUE PROOF OF MEN"	350
XXXV.	"SINCE THERE'S NO HELP, COME LET US KISS AND PART"	358
XXXVI.	"THY HUSBAND IS THY LORD, THY LIFE, THY KEEPER"	365
XXXVII.	"SWEET THAMES, RUN SOFTLY TILL I END MY SONG"	376

ILLUSTRATIONS

"IT WAS A DANCE OF POSTURE AND ATTITUDE—SLOW, GRACEFUL, AND QUIET" . . . . . *Frontispiece*

"ONE OF MANY MEETINGS IN MADAME ELVEDA'S DRAWING-ROOM" . . . . . *Facing p.* 16

"'YES,' SHE MURMURED, 'THE MAN WAS RIGHT. JEWESS! —JEWESS!—JEWESS!'" . . . . . " 80

"SHE SAT DOWN ON THE HEARTH-RUG IN ORIENTAL FASHION" . . . . . " 112

"EMANUEL HAD BROUGHT HIS WORK-TABLE INTO THE GARDEN" . . . . . " 224

SUNDAY MORNING IN MIDDLESEX STREET . . . . . " 272

"FRANCESCA SAW SET UPON HER FACE THE SEAL OF HER OWN PEOPLE" . . . . . " 336

"'YES,' SHE SAID, 'I WILL LEARN TO RESPECT THE PEOPLE'" " 368

THE REBEL QUEEN

PROLOGUE

I

THE SLAVE OF MAN

"I EXPECTED you, Emanuel."

The girl—she was little more—seated at the window turned her head quietly, and spoke with the appearance of calm, but her cheek flushed crimson and her hands trembled.

The clock was striking ten when her visitor opened the door of the drawing-room and stood in the doorway unannounced. He was quite a young man—not more than twenty-five—but he seemed older, by reason of his grave and thoughtful expression and his deep-set eyes. Looking at his dress, one might have set him down as a young working-man; he wore a loose square jacket—the kind of jacket that is sometimes affected by young clergymen as well as working-men; he had no gloves, and his boots were serviceable rather than neat. Yet one does not see in many young working-men features so fine, eyes so steady, or a face so strong. Moreover, the ordinary working-man very seldom shows a beard so long and silky as that which adorned this young man. He was an extremely handsome man, tall and well-proportioned, with the beauty of an Arab rather than that of an Anglo-Saxon. Such a type as his would be impossible in a young man of English descent. When in your walks abroad you pass such a young man you marvel, even considering the unexpectedness of the streets; then, if you are a person of travel and information, you begin to think of a street in a Spanish city — narrow, with lofty houses, windows with balconies, women leaning over the balconies, bits

of bright color in the hangings, old coats of arms carved on the fronts, and people down below showing just such faces. Then the word Sephardim comes back to your memory. This face, you say, belongs to the Children of the Dispersion; they were in Spain long before the legions of Titus completed that Scattering; they are of the ancient people, whose lineage is so long that, compared with them, the Bourbons are mushrooms and the Hapsburgs are of yesterday.

In this face was something of the eagle, the nose was narrow and slightly aquiline, the nostrils were finely cut and delicate, the eyes keen and clear, deep-set, under straight and well-marked eyebrows, and in color blue as the finest steel of Damascus; the lips were firm, the mouth finely curved; there was a rich, deep coloring of the cheek; the forehead was broad and white, the clustering hair was chestnut; the sun had touched that face with a glow which lingered on it. Surely the Rabbi Akiba, or Gamaliel, or even Onkelos himself, must have had such a face. Surely this was the face which belonged to the illustrious Maccabæan house. Surely this was the face at sight of which Joshua's enemies turned and fled. Such a face is best seen with a turban and a long flowing robe of silk, beneath which hangs by a crimson sash the cimeter; then such a face might serve for a portrait of Mohammed. Or, if you give it a kufeeyeh, and clothe the figure in a sheepskin, tied round the waist with a leather belt, it may serve for the Prophet Elisha when he was still young and had just received the cloak of his Master and Forerunner. Such a face, with such an expression, and accompanied or set off by a modern English dress, not of very grand appearance, appears incongruous, yet it is always striking and always handsome.

The girl—to repeat, she was little more—half rose from her chair; she was sitting at the other end of the long room at an open window looking out upon a West-End square; it was June, and the fragrance of lime blossoms filled the room. She half rose and sank back, her color changing to white; she gasped; she caught her breath.

The man still stood in the doorway, silent. His color did not change; his eyes showed no other emotion than that of steady purpose, a self-governed look which was always in them.

Then the girl mastered herself.

"I expected you," she repeated. "You said that you would

come back after a year; that you would give me a year to consider."

"You have had a year, and I have returned; it is a year this evening since we parted, and a year and a month since we were married."

"I am ready to talk to you, Emanuel."

She rose, swept back the long train of her evening dress with a practised hand, like a princess on the stage, and advanced to meet him. He closed the door, and walked into the room. About the middle of the floor both stopped, as if they were two sovereigns meeting on opposite sides of the frontier. There was no greeting, there was no kiss of man and wife, there was no hand-grasp. They were man and wife parted, as yet unreconciled. They stood face to face with three feet of carpet between them; they stood in silence for a space. The man's eyes were steady, commanding; the woman beneath his gaze quailed for a moment. But she recovered immediately, and returned his look—defiant, rebellious. The attitude of the pair, the eyes of the man and of the woman revealed the situation without a word. There was the man who would be Master, there was the woman who refused to obey. That was all. Yet it was a situation which demanded many words.

She was quite young, not more than two-and-twenty; she was dressed for the evening as few women of her age dare to dress. It was, to begin with, the dress of a *grande dame*; now it is only a *grande dame de par le monde*, so accepted by the world, who can venture, at twenty-two, to wear a dress which asserts position, claims authority, and commands respect. The ordinary girl of that age, even though she is a princess or a Parisian, is generally content to look lovely; she does not care about anything else. Rank and authority belong to the forties, the fifties, the sixties. At twenty-two, even when one is married, and therefore, presumably, no longer desires admiration, to be beautiful is enough. Apparently it was not enough for this girl. Perhaps she had a reason for magnificence on this night; she was dressed suitably. It was a great occasion—it was a turning-point. In such a crimson velvet, with such lace, with such rubies and pearls, with such gold chains, a Queen might be dressed—say, perhaps, the Queen of a half-civilized state, the Queen of Armenia, the Queen of Roumania, the Queen of Servia, the Queen of Abyssinia, the Queen of

Candia, Cyprus, or Rhodes. This woman, by no means a Queen, chose to dress in this manner—first, because she liked magnificence of all kinds, in dress, in furniture, in art, in carriages, in horses; next, because she was born to great wealth, and it was natural to her to wear things rich and splendid; and, lastly, because she hoped to bring her husband to submission by the beauty which he loved adorned—all men love beauty best adorned—as becomes great beauty.

She was dressed like a Queen, she looked like a Queen; but it was a Queen defiant, rebellious—a Queen going forth to war.

Her face was of the Oriental type, with which of late years we have become somewhat familiar. Formerly it was rarely seen, except occasionally at the theatre. Now we see it everywhere—in the stalls, at private views, on the stage, in studios, at concerts, at public functions. There are as many Oriental as Occidental types. This girl was not possessed of the almond eyes, black, long, soft, and languishing, which poets used to associate with the East; she could not be painted as Leila, or the Favorite of the Harem, or anything of that kind; nor was her complexion olive; nor had she a mass of black hair. On the contrary, her eyes were brown, clear and cold and keen; to-night there was no languishing in them and no tenderness; her features were finely, clearly cut, the curve of her lips well defined, her mouth full, firm—even hard—her nose somewhat aquiline, her forehead more square than seems to some consistent with perfect beauty; her hair, brown, abundant, was rolled up and round her head, confined by a ribbon or band in which gleamed small gold coins; her face was pale, but not anæmic; nor had it that morbid pallor which belongs to low vitality, and causes healthy men to shudder and turn aside. It was pale as certain artful hues of satin are pale, with a faint touch of color to lend it warmth. Moreover, this evening there lay on either cheek a red and flaming spot.

"You are my husband," she said. "I am, I suppose, Madame, or Mistress, or the Señora Elveda. I must wear my husband's name. I am the wife of Emanuel Elveda, scholar, chemist, philosopher, man of many ideas."

"I am your husband, Isabel."

"Emanuel Elveda," she went on, "is a man of ancient lineage, as well as a man of intellect. His ancestry is far more ancient than that of any Christian family, even the Bourbons, can boast.

In Spain his people pretended for generations to conform to the modern faith; they were ennobled. He is the Conde Elveda if he chooses to bear the title; but when I met my husband he was plain Emanuel Elveda. His family had lost their lands and their wealth; they had abandoned their rank; they had returned openly to their old faith. He was poor and proud."

"I am still your husband, Isabel," he repeated.

"I have said this, Emanuel, to show that I recognize your great qualities. This makes my rebellion the more daring, does it not? You remind me that you are still my husband. Does that mean still that you demand my submission?"

"It does."

"Then—if I still refuse?"

"A wife is not a servant or a slave."

"If you make her a slave, what matter for a name?"

"If you are my wife, obey your husband."

"I have reflected, as you wished me to do. I hoped that you would also reflect and come back open to reason. My position is exactly the same as it was last year; my opinions are the same; my resolution is unaltered."

"And mine."

"Will you give me a bill of divorce?"

"I will not."

"You have the right by the law of our People, if not by the law of the land. When did the law of the land override the law of our People? You may divorce your wife, because you are a man and she is a woman, for any cause that you please or for no cause; a notary will draw up the bill of divorce, the Rabbis will witness it. There is good and sufficient cause. Let me go."

"I will not let you go."

"Emanuel!"—she joined her hands and spoke earnestly—"if you ever loved me, or thought you loved me, by the memory of that time let me go. I will never, never, never again be your wife or any man's wife. Henceforth I will be free. Give me—that is give yourself—freedom; say to me in the language of the People and in the words of the Law: 'I put thee away, I dismiss and divorce thee; from this time thou art in thine own power; thou mayest be married to any other man whom thou pleasest; let no man hinder thee in any name from this day forward and forever, and Lo! thou art free to any man.'"

"No—I will not seek a bill of divorce."

"I am grieved on your account, Emanuel. All your life you will be bound to a woman who will refuse to live with you and to take care of you. Yet you want a wife more than most men, because you are helpless in many things. Take pity on yourself and release yourself."

"No, you are my wife; I am your husband. I will not surrender my wife, even though she repudiate her husband all her life. I will not cast upon her name the shadow and odium of a divorce."

The wife sighed. "I have done my best, Emanuel. It is for your sake that I ask it. For my own, as I go my own way henceforth, I am indifferent."

"Is there more to say?"

"No—and yet—we are going to part again. Perhaps we shall never meet again. You will hear of me, probably, as doing things you do not approve. There are certain things that I would say before you go—things that—that—well, I would that you should think of me as kindly as you can. Believe me, Emanuel, if there was any man whom I could own as lord and master it is you. Believe me, no other man will win love from me—"

"I believe it. You are Isabel."

She sat down, taking a chair beside her near the frontier. He took another. There was still the space of three feet between them; the chairs faced opposite ways, and they sat one looking east and the other west. The wife turned her head and rested it upon her hand; but the husband sat without looking round. Perhaps, in spite of his fixed purpose, he feared to look too long upon her face.

"Woman, in your eyes," she began, "is an inferior creature."

"She fills her place in the Divine Order; she can fill no other place; if she tries, there follow discords, rebellions, evils of all kinds."

"Oh! Divine Order—Divine Order!" she repeated impatiently. "But what else could I expect? It is the old, old jargon—the jargon of the Rabbis. When shall we have done with it? When will you step outside of it, Emanuel—you—a wise man—you—a scholar—you—a genius—you—when will you step out of the darkness?"

He shook his head. "The light," he said, "lies along the path following the Divine Order."

"My former friend—my pretended Master—it is nothing to me what the men of old said. I own nothing but the present; I see nothing but what is around me; I follow nothing but the way pointed out by living men. Go back to your dead past, if you will. Leave me to the actual present."

Again he shook his head. "It is the way of blindness," he said.

"When we parted last," she went on, "we had little time for explanation. You insisted; I refused. You still insisted; I refused with rage and with bitter words. I have repented of those words, Emanuel, but not of the refusal which you call discord and rebellion. That was too sacred a thing to be profaned by any hard words. But I was a rebel, and rebels are too often intemperate in speech and action. Besides, you angered me with your calm, cold words. 'Obey your husband,' you said. 'Obey your husband,' you repeated. I would not obey my husband, but to tell you of my resolution—my rebellion—was harder than you would think possible. Forgive those words, Emanuel."

"Does the sky ask to be forgiven for its sudden storms? There needs no forgiveness."

"Because, I suppose, a woman's words are worth so little," she replied, with a laugh. "A wise man, a learned man, like you, why should you regard any quick words of mine? Nevertheless, the refusal, I say, cost me more than you would think, if a woman's emotions are worth thinking about."

"A woman's emotions? All the world hangs daily upon a woman's emotions. Frankly, Isabel, your words are long since forgiven. Truly, I understood that before you—you—of your great and noble heart—could say such things you must have been very deeply moved. That is gone and forgotten. Let us go on. You have more to say before we part again."

"I should like you to understand, if you can. The weak point in such men as you is that you wrap yourself up in your cloak of tradition—of superstition—of so-called certainty—and refuse to listen. You are like the Catholic priest who says, 'We have the Truth Absolute,' and so refuses so much as to reason on things. In fact, beyond certainty one cannot go."

"That is so. Some things are certain—for instance, the relations of the Woman to the Man."

"You make it still harder for me to confess—or to explain—

my position. However, you know how a girl of our People is brought up. When she is born there are no rejoicings. No one hopes or expects anything from her. She steals into the world in silence. When her brother is born there are great rejoicings even in the poorest house. When the boy arrives at thirteen years and a half, he is called a Son of the Commandment, and is required to observe the six hundred and thirteen precepts which form the Law. What has the girl to learn?"

"She learns to bless the Sabbath bread; she lights the candles on the eve of the Sabbath, and repeats the prayer. These are all her duties."

"This is the Divine Order, in short — that the man shall learn everything, do everything, and be responsible. For the woman—"

"There is obedience. This is the whole of the Law for Woman."

"So I was brought up—I, with my intellect, my gifts—the heiress of this great fortune. I saw, being a girl of perception, that everything desirable goes to Man—the wealth, the honors, the position, the authority, the learning. At first I acquiesced. My women told me that it was so, and could not be otherwise. If things cannot be otherwise, it is foolish to repine. I saw from my infancy all the women submissive and unquestioning—all meek and obedient servants to the men. It could not be otherwise of course. To be the slaves of such men as one sees—oh!—horrible! So, I say, I made no inquiry into the matter at all. Among our people religion orders this submission. Presently I went into the outer world, where there was a freer air. I heard things said which made me think. There were girls who proposed independence as their right; there were some who had gained their independence. There were whispers, murmurs; at last voices with clear utterances. And I found that there had been women—were still women—who could do all that men could do—ay! as well. I myself have done as well as any man of my own age, and better—far better—than most. What is this new thing in the world? Nothing short of the great discovery that, given the pick of women, they can meet on equal terms the pick of men; yes, in any science, in scholarship, in anything not requiring your strength of muscle, the woman is as good as the man. I claim no superiority, as others do—equality alone satisfies me."

"Yet it is not so."

"Why?"

"First of all, because the Divine Order—say, if you please, Nature—has ruled it otherwise."

"Again"—with a gesture of impatience—"the Divine Order! Now listen. I looked about me, I considered, and I discovered that women are everywhere able to do work equal to that of the man, and even better. They make anything they try to make; they write novels, poems, books; the magazines are filled with essays and papers written by women; the shops are kept by women: look at the administration of business houses by French-women! There are women artists—"

"All this," said her husband, "is quite true."

"Actresses, musicians—in a word, this very generation effectually gives the lie, once for all, to the inferiority of women."

"You think so?"

"I think so. What Nature disproves when the experiment is once made can no longer be maintained as a theory."

"That is true. Has Nature disproved what the experience of the ages proves? One or two girls have passed examinations as well as the boys. They have even shown promise. Where is the performance? Where is the reversal of Nature's laws? Where is still the leading?"

"I say no more about it. You wrap yourself in your cloak of the Truth Absolute. Let me go on. It was more difficult for me than for other women to clear my mind of superstition. We are always Orientals. It is almost an instinct with us to believe that woman is not only lower than man, but that she ought to be married—it is a shame for her not to be married. Unfortunately, while I had emancipated myself from the doctrine of inferiority, I had not thrown off the supposed necessity for marriage. I therefore looked about for a husband, a fit mate for myself. I would have no money-maker; my own fortune was enough for a dozen families; I would not have an artist, because the artistic temperament is capricious. I wanted for my husband a scholar, a man of broad views, a man of generous instincts. I was still more limited in my choice because I would not marry outside the People. I found you."

"Yes," said her husband, "you found me."

"That you were poor; that you would never make any money;

that you were a man of books; that you would never go into society; that you would have none of the ordinary ambitions mattered nothing. I thought that you would go your way, and that I should go mine. Perhaps our ways would lie together, side by side. Perhaps they would lie apart. I thought that a man of your powers would at once accept the position and concede equality."

"You should have put it forward as a condition of marriage before, not after."

"I ought to have done so. I was wrong."

"You would have found many men, I dare say, ignoble enough to take your hand on that or any other condition."

"I trusted too much to my reasoning powers—too much to your liberal mind."

"Examinations cannot change the laws of Nature. Man is Master."

"Let us talk no more, then." She rose—they both rose; they faced each other again. The man's face was hard and fixed; the woman's, softer now, her eyes suffused with tears. "Emanuel, one word more, and then, if you choose, then—you can leave me."

"Say that word."

"I think that we may still be happy. Let there be no question as to mastery or of submission between us at all. The house will be managed without your advice; you can pursue your own studies in your own way. Leave me to my own way. Let me stand beside you unquestioned. Let me follow my own path, whether I climb beside you or above you, or whether I sink below you. Leave me free to act, free to speak, free to come and go as I please, as my reason and the purpose of my life may lead me. Hush! Don't speak yet—one moment! You know that I shall do nothing to bring any shade of dishonor upon your name, which will be an honored name. Oh! There is no other man in the world to whom I would humble myself so far as this. But for you—Emanuel! Look round you. This great house is yours; these servants are yours; the library is yours—everything is yours. I am your—your—equal. You shall sit in peace to work and meditate, with no care for your daily bread. We will walk together side by side. We will take counsel together. To be able to carry out your work, does not that tempt you? Only leave me—leave me free!"

"No," he said, "that is no marriage where the wife is suffered to go free. It is dishonor for the husband—it is disgraceful for the wife."

She sighed again. The man was inflexible. Had he but turned his head, had he but lifted his eyes, had he made the slightest gesture, she might have yielded to him. For in her heart she owned him for her Master; he was her Master in will, her Master in intellect, her Master in strength and purpose; in nobility and in generosity she had proved him her own Master. In one thing only she was his equal—in her pride.

He waited. Had she anything more to say?

"You must go, then, Emanuel," she said, sadly. "You will go out to your own life. I cannot bear to think that you may possibly be in want while I am so rich—so rich."

"I shall not starve."

"I know that you would die rather than take money from me; but, Emanuel, if you should be sick and suffering—"

"There are hospitals, and there are our own People."

"Not mine any longer. I give them up with my husband; I renounce the People, I belong to them no longer. Your old traditions, your jumble and jargon of ceremonies and superstitions, I will follow no longer. I throw them off!" With a fine gesture she renounced her People and her religion.

He shook his head. "You cannot renounce your People. Any other man or woman may renounce his race and enter another nation; you cannot. None of us may renounce our People; on our faces there is a mark set—the seal of the Lord—by which we know each other and are known by the world. Your People—you can no more change them than you can shake off that seal and sign."

"You cannot, I suppose, make me obey the Law?"

"No, I cannot. Farewell, Isabel—still my wife. Live out your life in your own way. I shall not interfere. You will make many acquaintances, but no friends. The only friends of life are those of childhood. As we are born, so we live. You will lead a life of intellectual luxury, a life without love or children"—she smiled, but he did not observe it—"a joyless, loveless, childless, friendless life. When you tire of it, send for me, and I will return to you."

He turned, and slowly walked out of the room.

When the door closed, his wife threw out her arms; it might have been a gesture of appeal, or of weakness, or of wrath, or of impatience, or of all four. In spite of her boasted equality she was beaten; the man would concede nothing to her, not even her own freedom; he would make no compromise; he was going back to the world of poverty, he would work with his own hands; she knew his pride and his firmness; he would be Master or nothing.

She, for her part, would live in splendor and great wealth; while he— But she would be his equal or she would not be his wife.

She went out of the drawing-room and looked over the stairs into the hall below. Her husband walked slowly down the stairs and across the hall, turning his head neither to the right nor to the left. He opened the street door and went out, shutting it behind him.

The wife sighed again. When she turned she found a little old woman—not really old, but she looked old—with brown skin and wrinkled face, beside her.

"Melkah," she said, "I am beautiful, am I not?"

"There is no woman in the world so beautiful."

"And I am dressed as a beautiful woman should?"

"The Queen of Sheba could not be better dressed."

"He is made of stone, Melkah. I put on my best to welcome and to move him. If ever I was attractive in the eyes of man it was to-night. I looked in the glass and saw that I was very beautiful. I thought that his stubborn will would give way at sight of this my beauty. Oh! I am ashamed, because I hoped to conquer—not through my reason or for the justice of my case, but through his weakness. But he has no weakness. He loved me once; he is a man made for love. If I had been the king's favorite decking myself out by order of the king I could not have looked more beautiful. But he is made of stone. His eyes never softened, his cheek never flushed; yet I know him, I know him. Oh! at a word, if I had but spoken that word—if I had but yielded—there would have been softening enough. It is not that he now scorns what once he loved. Oh! no—no—no—I am not jealous of Emanuel. No other woman could ever be to him what I have been. No—no—I am not jealous."

"Yet man is man," said the old woman. "And he is your husband."

"If not even my beauty could move him—oh! I know—wealth, ease, luxury have no charms for him. You cannot tempt him with the common things. And I humiliated myself to trying the only thing—the weapon of every woman—my own beauty. I paraded myself before his eyes. I am ashamed, Melkah."

"If a woman cannot persuade by sweet looks and sweet voice, how shall she prevail? And he is your husband."

"No, Melkah, he is my husband no more. He would be Master—that or nothing. Master!—my Master—mine!" She laughed bitterly. "I am to obey him in all things; to ask his will; to beg his permission. He would be Master or nothing. Then let him be nothing. Let him return to the poverty where I found him. My Master?—mine? No, Melkah, no!"

"Yet he is a man. And it is the nature of a man to be Master."

"It is best that we should part. There shall be no question who is Master of myself."

"Nay," said the old woman, "a wife is best with her husband. He is the Master; woman must obey. It is so written. We are so made. It is the Lord's own doing."

There fell upon their ears the sound of an infant's cry—it is a feeble cry, but it can be heard over the whole of a great house.

"The child, Melkah, the child! Oh! I did not tell him—I took care not to tell him. He does not know that he has a child, a child of the submissive sex, the obedient sex. He never shall know. A loveless, childless, joyless life he said I should lead. Shall I! He does not know; he never shall know. Let us run to the child, Melkah. I come, my sweet!" She cried aloud, as if the infant of three months could understand, but mothers are so. "I come, my darling! Mother comes!".

II

UNDER THE LAMPLIGHT

SEVENTEEN years later.

At the open window of a room on the entresol of the Grand Hotel, Charing Cross, sat a girl. Over her head she had thrown a wrap of some warm, soft, white stuff, and she leaned her head out of the window, looking down upon the street and upon the people in the street. The time was eleven in the evening, when the many theatres of the Strand turn out their congregations and the stream of life is at its fullest. It was, moreover, a night in June, in the height of the season. London was full; the crowds of the streets were made up of Londoners proper, English visitors from the country, Americans by the thousand, Gauls, Teutons, Muscovites, Cappadocians, Greeks, and Mesopotamians — yea, from the Isles and from far Cathay, from China and Malay and Melanesia; for all mankind in June rejoices to acknowledge that London is Queen of the cities of the world.

The people streamed along the pavement below the girl at the window; omnibuses drove up at the corner; the people fought for places; the incense of their cigarettes and cigars and pipes ascended to the entresol—yea, even as high as the first floor; the girl watched and listened as they passed her. In the broad road beyond the pavement the hansom cabs flashed meteoric lights as they drove rapidly along.

"Mother," said the girl—she spoke English perfectly, but with a slightly foreign accent—"this is wonderful. We have never seen anything like this in all our travels. Oh, this is London! Oh, it is London! It is my own birthplace! Oh, what crowds! Oh, what a wealth of life! This is better than the parks that we saw this afternoon; better than the broad silent squares; better even than the streets, with the lovely shops."

The elder lady — she was not much more than forty — put down the book she was reading, rose and stood beside her

daughter. Together they looked down upon this full and flowing stream.

"Yes," said the mother, "it is a wonderful crowd. There is nothing so wonderful as London in all the world; nothing so pleasant, if it were not for the detestable climate. We have kept the best to the last, dear. Shall you be pleased to settle down after all our wandering?"

"I don't know. I remember nothing but wandering. I think I like changing the towns. Of course, hotels are alike everywhere, but the language outside is different."

"We will give up the hotels, and settle down in a house of our own."

"Hadn't we better stay in a hotel, mother? You see we know our way about in a hotel, and everything is done for us. In a house we should have to think of things for ourselves. Suppose the waiting went wrong?"

"We will have a house-keeper, my dear. She will provide for us. Don't be afraid of the waiting. Yes, it is a truly wonderful crowd; I think it is growing thicker. That is, I suppose, because the theatres are emptying."

"I should like to stay here and to look at the crowd every night. Oh, what a crowd it is! The people cannot move; they are all jammed up together. See, they are quite good-humored—they laugh and sing! Now the pressure is relieved, they go on again. I wonder who they are—all of them, so many thousands—every one of them the centre of the whole world, just as important to himself as I am. Isn't that wonderful to think of? As many girls in the world, so many Francescas."

"With a difference, my child. With a difference."

"I wonder who they are," she repeated. "Every one with his life behind and his life before! Look at the gleaming lights in the road; look at the rows of lamps! And, oh! look again at the crowd—the endless crowd! Who are they? What do they think about?"

"The mystery of the crowd lies only in your own brain, Francesca. These people are mostly quite common folk—prosaic, uninteresting."

"Oh! But here and there a poet, mother—there must be here and there a young poet, his mind fired with the crowd—or a young musician, or a young painter."

"Perhaps. Mostly clerks, shop-girls, shopmen, students, going home after the theatre. Some of them are visitors like ourselves, people who are staying at hotels. Most of them are people who live in London and have to work for their daily bread. In the evening they are free; in the daytime they are bondsmen. They must work or they would starve."

"Strange! To work or starve! It seems so terrible!"

"It is not terrible, because it is the common lot. What all alike endure is never intolerable. Besides, they say that the common lot is growing slowly better. We who are wealthy and need not work share the common lot in other ways. For instance, the common lot is to endure pain and to die before our time, because of ignorance. Yet we do not feel it intolerable. As for these people, they are always removed from starvation by a certain number of days—months—years—for which provision has been made by saving. You need not pity the crowd, Francesca. Remember, the many must work for the few. It is the social law; it cannot be evaded. The many"—this lady had large possessions, and was, therefore, perfectly clear on this point—"the many," she repeated, "must work for the few. There is no help for them. They must!—they must!"

"Do any of the people down below work for us, I wonder?"

"Very likely—in some indirect way. We have money, for instance, invested in Government securities. The dividends paid on these have to be raised by taxes. Sometimes it is a direct tax, more often an indirect tax. People have got to work in order to pay these taxes first, before they get anything at all for themselves. So that, you see, all these people down below are working for us."

"Don't you feel rather ashamed, mother, sometimes, to think that people are working for you?"

"No. I remember that it is the natural law. One man is so clever and so industrious that he not only pays his share of the taxes and gets enough of everything to make him comfortable, but he also puts money by and invests it in those stocks, and so begins to make people work for him. Money would be of no use if people were not made to work for those who have it. Never be ashamed of your wealth, Francesca. Rather rejoice that your forefathers were prudent and wise."

[See page 30

"ONE OF MANY MEETINGS IN MADAME ELVEDA'S DRAWING-ROOM"

The young lady made no answer to this brief lesson in political economy.

"We shall never—never—never," the matron continued, "abolish the advantage of being strong. We can protect the weak by laws and police, but the strong will always trample on them in the long-run. Originally, when we all had to go hunting for the daily food, the strong man let the weak man catch the deer, and then killed him for it. In course of time this method was found to be a waste of material. So the strong man left off killing the weak man, and made a slave of him instead. Then the slave hunted for his master every day. The same thing continues to the present day, and always will continue. Now and then the strong become weak, and are in their turn enslaved. Most of the people you see down below are the weak; consequently, they have to spend their lives making money for their masters. They stand at counters and sell things for their masters; they do all sorts of things for the money which finds them food and shelter; they must do all sorts of things, they have no choice but to work or starve; therefore they are slaves. In this country they are very cleverly allowed to call themselves free; they even boast of their freedom, and congratulate themselves upon the great cleverness they have shown in winning their freedom; yet all those who work at another man's bidding are slaves. Freedom—real freedom—only exists with those who have acquired wealth. Servitude can never be abolished."

"But you are always trying to abolish slavery for women, mother."

"I want equal rights for women and for men. The strong woman must have as much freedom as the strong man; as much right to exercise her strength, which is strength of mind, not of body. For the weak woman I ask no more than is accorded to the weak man. She shall have whatever rights he has."

"Yes. It must be dreadful, all the same, to be weak. There are a great many women in the street. Are they working-women?"

"Whatever they are, my dear, they are what the men have made them, for they are still the slaves of men. What we would give them by the aid of the stronger woman is some kind of independence. At present they are, as you say, down below."

She returned to her chair. The girl relapsed into silence.

watching, watching. Presently she began again, compelled to speak of the crowd.

"Mother, there is no end to the people. Where do they come from? Where are they going to? It is like the march-past of a great army. There were crowds in Paris, but nothing like this. Suppose it was the resurrection of all the dead men and dead women that ever were—marching, marching, marching past, under the moon and in the lamplight. Their faces would be white like the faces of these people, going on to meet the new life, whatever it may be. I see the expectancy in their eyes. Some of them are afraid. All are anxious."

"Francesca, you are dreaming."

"They might be dead, these people; their faces show so white, they laugh no longer, they are quite grave. They talk because, you see, when people have been dead—"

"Francesca! No more dreams." But she rose again and looked out of the window herself. "Their faces are white partly because the light that falls upon them makes them look pale, partly because London people are mostly pale, from working too hard. The English people differ from all other people in the world, for they not only work because they must, but they work because they like it. We are not in Naples, my daughter, where no one will work if he can help it; nor in Paris, where most men hate work—but in London, where it is the nature of man to work. He loves it, he works with zeal, he works himself to death. He is the best worker in the world—this is what makes him look so pale."

The girl was silent again for a while. Presently she looked up and said:

"Mother, I have made it out, the tune to which they tramp along. It is a fine marching air. Listen!" She sang a few bars. "There—now listen again. Do you hear it? Boom—boom—boom! It sounds like a funeral march, too. Perhaps it is a funeral march. Why not? They look so sad and so white. They are burying something, perhaps—"

"You might set words to your march; the midnight march of Charing Cross—the march of the London crowd—if you knew more of the crowd and the people. But I cannot hear your march, child of imagination. I hear only the tramp of the boots and the patter of the shoes."

Francesca began to sing words to the weird, wild tune she had discovered in the tramp of the crowd: "We are marching, we are marching, one and all. We are marching where we know not, we are meeting what we know not, we are passing through the grave to what we know not. We are marching, we are marching. There is hope, there is hope within us all. We are marching, we are marching on with terror, yet with hope."

"Child! child! you are full of fancies. Come in, forget the crowd, and go to bed."

"Presently, mother, presently." She looked and listened again. "Their voices are all fused into one voice. I think I was wrong about their hope, mother. It is a sad voice."

"Oh! my child. When was the voice of humanity ever a joyful voice? There is too much pain in life, believe me, too much suffering."

Francesca listened again. "No, mother, there *is* hope in it. Oh! the voice grows more cheerful. Listen!"

"I hear not one voice, but a hundred."

"The crowd grows thinner. Some of the women linger. The light of the lamps makes their faces wan."

"You have been in many cities, Francesca. Where have you seen joyful faces in the women of the crowd?" She left the window and resumed her chair at the table.

"Wherever we go, mother," the girl replied, with a little impatience, "you ask me that question."

"They never do look happy. Everywhere they live in the same subjection; with the hardest work and the poorest pay. Always the slaves of man; they play for his pleasure, make themselves beautiful for his pleasure, work for his profit and pleasure. Ask yourself why it is so."

"Yes, mother, yes. If there were any good in my asking."

"Still, to get into the habit of questioning is something. And perhaps an answer may come."

Francesca shrugged her shoulders and turned to the window again.

"As for me," she said, "what can a girl do?"

Her mother made no reply.

In a few moments Francesca drew in her head. "The crowd," she said, "is thinning very fast. I have seen enough. These are the people who must work or starve, but who love work—strange

people! To love the penalty of life! They work for us. What have we done that they should be made to work for us? And the women here, as everywhere else, are oppressed and ill-treated. But we are not—we are free. Is it fair that any should be free?"

She stood before the empty fireplace and played with the flowers in a vase—played in the meaningless way that betrays uneasy thoughts. These children of fancy have such times. Francesca was in a questioning mood; the contemplation of this crowded life excited her. She was ready to protest that she heard too much of the subjection of women; she felt that, somehow or other, such universal subjects as the true relations of sex would settle themselves without her assistance; a great crowd such as she had witnessed raised many other thoughts in her mind.

Her mother looked at her gravely.

"Sit down, my dear, and let us talk. You think I am always dinning into your ears that same story. Don't you know how they teach boys grammar and how they teach children catechism? By constant repetition. That is why I am always telling you the same thing."

"But what can I do, mother? Does it help only to know a thing?"

"You will be rich. You will be able to make friends. No girl need remain friendless if she is rich. Oh! I do not mean that you are to buy friends and flatterers with money. That is an old copybook phrase. But a pleasant and a clever girl like you, Francesca"—the girl blushed; everybody likes to be called pleasant and clever—"and a pretty girl"—Francesca smiled incredulous, and shook her head—well, she was bony just at that age—"a girl who is going to be pretty, naturally attracts the friendship of other pleasant girls. So that if you want friends you can command them. Then, if you take up a cause, you can help it by your wealth as well as by your personal work. A few women in society, with wealth and influence, might go far to revolutionize the present conditions. Perhaps—I hope—you will feel this subject, some time or other, so deeply that there will be no choice for you but to work for it and to live for it. Equality is all I contend for—not superiority, as some women claim—but it must be perfect and absolute equality. A woman must be the absolute equal of man—in all relations of life the absolute equal."

"I have thoroughly learned that lesson, mother."

Madame Elveda sat in silence for a few minutes, glancing at her daughter, who still stood playing with the things on the mantel-shelf. Then she began in a low voice, as if talking to herself: "Coming back to London after so many years raises many ghosts of the past. It was here that I spent my honey-moon—all my short wedded life. Here you were born—when my wedded life was over. Your father never saw you, Francesca. Shall we talk a little about it?"

"Mother"—the girl turned quickly—"if it will not pain you."

"It pains me less to tell you than to let you go on in ignorance. I have never talked much to you about your father. Nor has Melkah told you much."

"She told me I was never to pain you by asking about him."

"Yes; but you are no longer a child. You ought to know. My dear, we were parted before your birth; but not by death. We parted by mutual consent."

"Why, mother?"

"You are so like him sometimes, my dear, that I tremble only to look at you. You have his eyes exactly. Your voice is so like his that I seem to hear him speaking. Now, Francesca, learn that there was never in the whole world a better man, a more tender lover, a nobler man, or a cleverer man. He seemed to know everything—languages, literature, science—everything. He had a way—a magnetic way—of compelling you; while he talked you were carried out of yourself; he made your mind follow his whithersoever he pleased; he held you rapt as long as he chose. Why, I remember, even at the moment when I was sending him away, feeling that if he only chose, if only he willed, I should tremble and sink at his feet and give up everything. He knew that he could compel me, but he gave me—he actually gave me, out of his goodness—the very freedom that he refused in words. He might have compelled obedience by a look, and he knew it. There was never a more wonderful man. Sometimes, when he spoke of great things, lofty things, I seemed to listen to a prophet. Never have I met any man so great as Emanuel"—her voice dropped—"Emanuel Elveda."

"But why, mother, why?"

"I was always free from the beginning. My father never exacted obedience. I read all the books about the rights of women. I thought, when I married, that my husband, a man of science,

would readily fall in with my opinions. I foolishly thought that reason was stronger than religion. He was an Oriental in many ways, and when the occasion arose he demanded submission. It was a month after our marriage. I refused. We parted for a year by consent. He returned more obstinate than ever. To all my arguments he had but one reply: 'It is the law of the Lord,' he said,' the woman is subject to the man.'"

"What did he mean by the law of the Lord?"

"In the sacred book it is so written. My dear, the Oriental—Moslem, Jew, or Buddhist—all believe that woman must obey man, by the law of the Lord. The Christian holds the same belief, but he does not proclaim it quite so clearly. He will not, however, suffer women to preach in the churches, or to become priestesses of his mysteries, or to become lawyers, or to sit in Parliament, or to hold office. Some of them, like the Jews, put the women in a separate part of their churches, as if they were not worthy to sit with the men; and some of them will not suffer them so much as to sing in the choir. When religion seems to teach a thing custom grows up round it and makes it almost impregnable. In your case, my dear, you have been left free to find for yourself the religion that satisfies your soul."

"And so you parted?"

"So we parted. My dear, it drove me nearly mad to remember afterwards what I had lost. Yet I was right—a hundred times right. To break through the wall of custom was worth any loss. We parted so. He left me, proud and unyielding. I have never seen him since. He is dead. Of that I am certain, or I should long since have heard of him. He would have made some great discovery. He must be dead."

"Poor mother!" Francesca had thrown herself upon a footstool and was holding her mother's hands.

"When I parted from him I parted from all my People—from all his People—from all my friends. I went out alone into the world with you, child, and with Melkah. I found peace in wandering and in observing and in working. The world knows now how well I have worked."

"I am glad you have told me, mother. It explains so much that I never understood. It brings me closer to the world."

When Madame Elveda sent her husband away she carried into

effect her resolution to separate from her own People and her own religion—one of the religions which make of woman the inferior of man. This was not difficult. She transferred the management of her great fortune—it consisted chiefly in receiving dividends—from Jewish to Christian hands; her cousins and friends, who were Parisians and of her own People, allowed her to go away unnoticed; she had gone out of the People; she took her maid Melkah, the Syrian Jewess, and her baby, and she went away. She gave up friends and cousins and everything and went away. For a long time nobody heard anything about her. Now, if a cousin goes away and stays away, and makes no sign, one ceases to think about him or to talk about him. In Madame Elveda's case her great fortune kept her from being altogether forgotten; moreover, rumors reached Paris, where she was remembered. She was seen at Florence; she was seen at Venice; she passed a winter at Malaga. They knew that she was living and that she had a child. As for her husband, no one knew what had become of him—he was gone.

The people in Paris learned further, from time to time, that their cousin had become a very dignified and stately person, most difficult of access, even impossible of access to any of her own People. She had left the religion. Pity—a thousand pities—that so much money should go away from the People and the family!

Then the cousins in Paris were startled rather than pleased by the appearance of a work. It appeared simultaneously in English, French, German, Italian, and Russian; it was published at the same time in London, New York, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Rome—a bulky volume, crammed with facts and statistics, stories and illustrations. This work was called *Women in Western Europe*, and it was written by Isabel Elveda. The book, although so big and bulky, was published at an absurdly low price, so that everybody could get it. Unfortunately, it was too complete; it proved an encyclopædia of information on the subject, but was almost as difficult to read as a blue-book. However, the reputation of the author was made for life. She had written *the* book on this great subject. The position of woman in Europe from the fourth century to the present time was fully and powerfully treated—what she suffered, how she endured, what she suffers now as wife, as mother, as worker in field and

factory, shop and work-room. It was a terrible book to those who had time to read it through; nearly every paper in the world had articles upon it, and then—people remembered the author and forgot the book. This is the way of things. You move the world easily by a faithful presentation of the truth: the world likes to be moved. Then the world goes on to be moved by something else. The only thing is to keep on hammering. Now, in the great question of woman, her work and her pay, her hours and her treatment, what we fondly call "interests" are concerned. Many a noble income would become slender if Madame Elveda's doctrines prevailed. Where incomes must be considered, abstract rights must be neglected. I do not think that Madame Elveda's book has advanced the cause of woman's freedom by one single step. The "interests," you see, are colossal and wide-spread; they range from the great and powerful manufacturer to the husband of the laundress.

It was very shortly after the appearance of this book that Madame Elveda returned to England. Her daughter was now seventeen—more Continental in her ways of thinking than English. The mother wished to complete her child's education in the country where she was born. She proposed, by the help of her book, of the cause for which she wrote, and her great wealth, to take some kind of position in society—and that still apart from her own People. She no longer called herself a Jewess. She told Francesca—what was doubtless half true—that they were Spanish Moors. Some of the anciently settled Jews of Spain did go over with the Moors. They were Spanish Moors.

"Good-night, child," said the mother. "You have seen enough to-day, and you have heard enough. Your eyes are too bright. Good-night! and sleep long and well."

When she was left alone she drew out a letter, which she opened and read. "For twenty years"—the letter was from her agent—"the money settled upon your husband on your marriage has been paid to the London bank. I have recently learned that not a single check has ever been presented. Is he alive? If not, why do you have this money continued? Of course, fifty thousand francs a year is nothing to you; but why pay the money needlessly? And why not cause inquiries to be made? If he is dead, why not ascertain the fact?"

"He is dead," she murmured. "He must be dead long since. Else he would have done some great thing; his name would long since be noised abroad over the whole world. Yet the money must be paid until we know."

In her own room, Francesca obediently went to bed. But her brain was excited; she could not sleep. The revelation of her mother's history, the great crowd of people, excited her and drove sleep away. She rolled her head upon the pillow; she opened her eyes in the dark room to chase away the thoughts that were like spectres. At last she sprang out of bed and pulled back the curtains to let in the light from the lamps below. Then she put a wrapper over her head and shoulders, and opened the window softly and looked out again.

It was past one o'clock. The crowd had all gone. Now and then a man walked quickly along, now and then a policeman with heavy foot-fall passed under the windows; there were no more hansoms, no more omnibuses. The air was cool and fresh; Francesca shivered and drew her wrapper closer. Two women passed along under her window; they were talking; they stopped below the lamplight. Francesca leaned out, listening. One of them seemed to be comforting the other. Why did they not go home like all the rest? Then one broke into sobs. She wept aloud; she threw up her arms. She cried:

"Oh, my GOD! I am so miserable!"

Francesca put out her head farther.

"Why are you so miserable?" she cried.

The two below clutched each other by the hand. It was like a voice from the skies.

"Why are we miserable?" they echoed.

"Are you unjustly treated? Come to-morrow and see my mother. Shall I give you some money?"

The two girls below looked up. "It's—it's— a young lady," one cried; "she's looking out of window." Then they ran away as fast as they could. Francesca did not, therefore, learn why they were so miserable.

Now no one was left in the street at all. Why was this woman crying in her misery? The girl lay down again, having left the window open and returned to her bed, where she lay till the sky was red with the morning — thinking, thinking. All the things that her mother had told her, all that were

written in her mother's book, crowded tumultuously into her head.

When at length she went to sleep, a long procession drifted before her eyes—a procession of women.

When she awoke in the morning that weeping woman under the lamplight came back to her. She was the woman of all women—the woman of Paris, the woman of Rome, the woman of Naples, the woman of Berlin, the woman of Vienna—she stood for all. She threw up her arms in the name of all the women; she cried aloud, "Oh, my GOD, I am so miserable!"

At breakfast she appeared with pale cheeks and eyes red with watching.

"Mother," she said, "let us go back to what we said last night. If I wished, you said, I might do something. Well—if I wished—if I wished— You wished and you made a great sacrifice. But I don't know if I could do that. But—if I wished—what could I do?" She was nervous and shaken. She hardly understood what she said.

Her mother kissed her and answered lightly. To answer seriously would have done no good. Enough that the girl was moved.

"What can you do, my dear? You can first take a cup of tea. We talked too much last night. You were excited with everything. As for what you can do, if you wish—well—you are as yet too young to do anything. You are a young lady not yet come out of the hands of your tutors and teachers."

So Francesca sat down and took some tea, and brake bread, and was comforted. Her mother went on talking of things indifferent.

"You must be 'finished,' as they say. You know that a modern girl is a very fine work of art. No Greek statue can compare with a modern girl. Think of what she knows! Two or three languages, music, painting, good or bad. She can write verses, perhaps—novels, perhaps; she has manners; she can dress, which is in itself a fine art; she is able to talk about most things intelligently; nowadays she has a little science. The elementary woman—body and brain—is the lay figure on which all this superstructure is built; it is completely hidden away and forgotten; no human being was ever so far from primitive man as the modern girl. The original girl is lost—forgotten. When I think

of the thing I am amazed that we can so transform a woman. Well, my dear, you are getting on. When you are turned out, finished, you will then wish, choose, act, think, and work as you please. You will have for nothing all the freedom for which I have paid so much."

CHAPTER I

THE GRAND REFUSAL

MADAME ELVEDA's drawing-room—one of the very largest drawing-rooms in one of the very largest houses in Cromwell Road—lent itself admirably to that amusement which is always delightful to the performers, and occasionally to the spectators—the amateur drama. It consisted of one big room and one not so big. The latter made an admirable stage; the former an excellent auditorium.

This evening there was a performance, but the big room was empty save for Madame Elveda, who sat alone and looked on. She was herself at once audience, stage-manager, and critic.

The play was written by her daughter, who also played the principal part. It was called "The Rebel Queen," and was a play in two short acts. At this house a play very often filled up part of the evening, but never the whole of it—a practice which greatly increased the popularity of the house. The reason is obvious. In society everybody—especially every girl—would like to play the principal part all the evening through, and when one has to sit and look on at other girls playing one might just as well be in the stalls at once.

But this was a full-dress rehearsal.

The curtain drawn aside showed an interior—a room—one end of a large room. Along the sides were pillars of marble; between the pillars were curtains or hangings of white, green, and blue silk, fastened with purple cords; the pavement was of marble, white, blue, red, and black, in patterns; the back of the room was partly open to what seemed an extensive garden (Madame Elveda's conservatory), and partly hung with the silk curtains. These gently waved and swayed, as if moved by the gentle breeze, and there was wafted into the auditorium (the large drawing-room) a heavy, languid perfume, breathing rest and happy dreams and thoughts of love.

"A Room in the Harem! Vashti's own room in the Palace of Shushan—Vashti, the Queen and favorite of Ahasuerus, who reigns from India even to Æthiopia. Very good," said the audience. "Push back the pillars a little—so. Get all the effect you can of breadth and length—that is much better. The Palace of Shushan gave the Queen large and airy rooms. The fragrance was a very happy thought, Francesca. What is it?"

"Jasmine and orange-blossom," Francesca made reply from the couch on which she was lying. "I will add some stephanotis for the evening. It must be a heavy fragrance—languid—intoxicating."

This couch, which lay across the room at the end, was the only piece of furniture. It was of white marble, but it was piled with cushions or pillows of silk. A lion's skin lay over the lower part, the head and fore-legs hanging down. There was a lion's skin on the floor, and there were other silken cushions lying about. A lute and a mandolin stood in a corner. The time was evening, and the moonlight lay upon the palms and orange-trees outside. A hanging lamp threw a soft colored light over the room; there was not light enough to read by, nor was there light enough to work by; but in the Queen's room at evening no one wanted either to read or to work. There was light enough to see the Queen's beauty; light enough for talking — singing — dancing. What more light can one want?

"The shade over the lamp is too modern," said the audience. "You must have a lamp—yet . . . I wonder what they used to do in Assyria for lamp-shades?"

"We will have colored glass," Francesca replied. "No one knows how ancient glass is."

"Very well—and no one will inquire, I dare say. Stand up, girls. Let me see your dresses. Yes, very good indeed; you look really as if you had stepped straight out of the British Museum. Capital! Now go back to your positions. Y—yes. Could not the groupings—remember, you are the Queen's handmaidens. Do not turn your heads in this direction at all — you must have eyes for nothing but the Queen. While Melkah continues her story you must convey the impression that you are watching the Queen as well as listening to the story. Clara, my dear, you are going to sing. Take the lute and touch it gently from time to time; that shows you are thinking of your own

duties; and, besides, a note of music now and then sets off the voices. Shall you have the dance to-night?"

"Everything," said Francesca. "This is our last chance of improving the thing."

"Very well, dear. Now we will go on, if you please."

On the couch piled with cushions lay a girl—Francesca Elveda herself—not sleeping, but dreamily, with eyes half-opened. She lay upon her side, her head upon her arm. She was young—one could see so much in the soft light—perhaps twenty. A light silk robe covered her from head to foot; her figure, outlined beneath it, was partly shown by the moonlight which fell upon the lower part of the couch. Her eyes, which were blue, glowed in the warm red lamplight. This was Queen Vashti, in whose beauty the King delighted. At her head stood a girl with a large feather fan. Half a dozen girls—they were the Queen's handmaidens—lay or sat about the room in various attitudes—the hardness of the pavement mitigated by the cushions. One leaned against the pillar; another sat in Oriental fashion; a third lay prone; a fourth pillowed her head in the lap of the first; one held a lute, and, as the audience had suggested, touched the strings from time to time. And a little old woman, wrinkled multitudinously, sat in the midst and told a story, while all listened. But either because they were bad actors, or because they were anxious not to lose the least movement of their mistress, or because they were supposed to know the story already, they listened carelessly. The last theory best explains their indifference, because the Oriental story-teller's répertoire, though extensive, is well known to Oriental listeners. No new story is ever invented. All the stories turned upon love; upon terrible Jinns, who frightened nobody; and upon the wonderful good-fortune that transformed a simple girl in the Seraglio into the favorite of the King.

However, the old woman went on, chanting in a shrill monotone, just as the modern Arab reads his Koran.

"So," she said, "when the Jinn found that he was caught, and could in no way escape unless he promised to obey the two girls who had trapped him, he consented. 'Tell me,' he said, 'what you would have.' Then the first girl replied, 'I would have love—the love of the greatest king that lives—I would be Queen of the Harem; I would have slaves and chamberlains and a crown of gold and silk robes and bangles and chains and—' 'Enough' said

the Jinn; 'all this I can get for both of you.' But the other shook her head. 'I desire,' she said, 'to be the slave of no man. Let me, alone among women, be free.' 'That also can be done,' said the Jinn. So he sware by the Holy Name, and they let him out. And he was a righteous Jinn, who feared the Holy Name, and therefore he kept his promise, and it happened unto these two maidens as he promised, so that they obtained what they desired. To one came love. She was desired by a king as great as King Ahasuerus, whose empire is from India even unto Æthiopia. And the King delighted in her beauty, and gave her slaves to wait upon her, and chamberlains to guard her, and handmaidens to watch over her beauty, and robes broidered with gold and pearls and gleaming with diamonds — she became just such a Queen as Vashti herself." Here Vashti shook her head impatiently. "And the days passed by, and, while other women grew old and lost their beauty, this Queen remained young and grew always day by day more beautiful. So faithful was that Jinn.

"But the other girl—she who desired freedom, which is a madness in woman—also obtained her desire. When the Jinn left her she returned home. And, lo! her beauty departed from her; therefore she was not given in marriage, and she was scorned by the women and despised by the men. So she lived apart and alone, and became a wise woman. All diseases she could cause or cure; they sought her from every harem; men feared her; she could compel rain for the thirsty land or keep it off; the serpents obeyed her, and the lion lay down before her. But she was alone, and no man ever loved her."

"But she was free," said Vashti. "She was free. Which was happier, the slave of love or the free woman?"

"Nay," the old woman replied; "the free woman was like the first wife of the first man, of whom the Jews relate that she would not obey her husband, wherefore she was driven forth, and is now a she-devil and the companion of Jinns, and rages against the children of the woman who took her place, because they should have been her children had she been submissive."

The girls sat up and stretched themselves. The history moved them not. They knew it all beforehand, yet, like children, they wanted to hear it over and over again. As for themselves, they had no adventures, nothing ever happened to the maidens of the harem; they had no choice and no chance; the King would not

delight in them, they languished in the soft airs of the house set in the midst of gardens, they were loveless and childless, they were slaves who waited on the Queen. Perhaps they still hoped, long after the thing was hopeless, to find favor in the King's sight.

Vashti raised her head again. "The woman who was free," she said, dreamily, "the woman who was free. Strange! To be free! Melkah the Syrian, have you no more stories to tell me of the woman who was free? I am sick of the woman who submits and is a slave. We are all slaves. Yes—yes—I know; it is our lot—and yet—"

"I have none such, O Queen! Except this story of the woman who was a witch, and the story of Lilith, who disobeyed the King and is now an Evil Spirit, there are no stories of women who are free. Women cannot be free; they obey those who fight for them. He who fights is Lord. So have the Gods ordained; so is it best for us."

"Sing to me," said Vashti, lying back again and closing her eyes.

Then the maiden whom Madame Elveda had called Clara stood up, took the lute, and sang to it, playing a soft and gentle air, a song of the Seraglio in praise of the King's Favorite:

Lo! she cometh, bright as break of day;
Fair as crescent moon, she cometh forth;
Queen of him whom all the lands obey—
Yea, from East to West and South to North.

In a garden walled and fencèd round,
Lo! the fountain sealed, the living well,
Where the spices linger is she found,
There she lieth where the roses dwell.

Trees of frankincense and spices sweet,
Palm and calamus and trellised vine,
Play their shifting shadows round her feet,
Make for her a fair and fitting shrine.

Lilies lift for her their petals red,
Grapes in purple clusters wait for her;
Where she steps her maidens strew and spread
Fragrance of the myrtle and the myrrh.

"O thou fairest!" boughs and leaves and trees—
"O thou fairest!" fruit and flowers sing;
"O thou fairest!" sighs the love-sick breeze
In the fencèd garden of the King.

In the last verse all the girls took up the words, "O thou fairest!" in a kind of chorus to the single voice singing "Boughs and leaves and trees," and in the last line they all sang together:

In the fenced garden of the King.

"A garden—a garden enclosed—is the King's Favorite," said Melkah, the story-teller. "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed. She is a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon. Thus sayeth the wise King, the great King, he who wrote the Song of Songs. He loved much, but this song he wrote for the woman he loved most."

The Queen paid no heed to the song or to the singer, or to flatteries of the old woman. She lay, head on hand, gazing straight before her, her eyes like two stars gleaming in the lamplight.

The singer laid down her lute and waited for a word of approval. None came. She sat down again, and all were silent, watching their mistress.

Then the Queen caught her breath quickly, and lifted her head—

"Sing to me; dance to me. Drive my thoughts away from me!" she cried.

Two of the maidens sprang to their feet, and taking hands, began to dance. It was a dance of posture and attitude—slow, graceful, quiet; the girl who held the lute touched it gently, as if the dance were a song and as if she was playing an accompaniment.

The Queen looked on, but carelessly. The dance had no power to distract her thoughts. When they had danced for five minutes, she waved her hand and the dancers ceased.

Vashti threw off the silken coverlet and sprang impatiently to her feet.

She was taller than the average, much taller; a mass of brown hair was coiled about her head, but her eyes were blue, a dark, deep blue; her complexion was white, with a touch of color in the cheek—not the English ruddy touch, but the glow under the skin of the South; she was dressed in some silken stuff that sparkled in the lamplight with gold thread and precious stones, her bare arms were laden with gold bracelets, round her ankles lay bangles and rings of gold, her fingers were covered with rings,

round her neck lay more gold chains, gold thread gleamed in her hair. She was all gold. She threw up her arms with an impatient gesture, and stepped down the stage. Her maidens rose and stood waiting.

"Oh!" she cried. "All day—every day—flowers and fruit, love-songs, stories of Jinns, dancing, and obedience—nothing else. I am weary—I—"

Said Melkah, the old woman, "Does the Queen call jewels and gold and embroidery nothing? She who is the King's Favorite has the whole world. Is that nothing?"

"That free woman, Melkah, she whom no man desired, she who lived alone and was wise, and could command the rain—what is my empire compared with hers? Flowers and fruit, love-songs, stories of Jinns, dancing, fine robes, that is all — there is nothing more."

Melkah laughed. "What more does the world contain? Let the Queen have patience. She has all there is. When youth and beauty vanish, these vanish too. Let the Queen rejoice in her youth and beauty."

Outside there arose a mighty shouting with the blare of trumpets.

"It is the King who feasts," said Melkah. "All the Princes of the Empire are with him. This is the seventh night of the great feast. The King's heart is glad within him. The Princes drink the King's wine in vessels of gold. May the King live forever! Life and strength, fruit and wine, and the flesh of lamb and antelope, and the singing girls and the dancing girls and love. What is there to ask for more? Is the King weary of the things for which all men pray and none but kings can enjoy in full? Be contented, O Queen, with what contents the King."

The shouting continued. Never before had the King's revelries been so loud. But it was the last night, and on the morrow the Princes would depart each to his own country.

The Queen listened. "They are hot with wine," she said. "They will drink more. Then they will not know what they do or say. Yet, they command, and the world must obey."

Then there were voices heard outside and steps, and the curtain was drawn aside and a burly fat negro appeared. He bowed down to the ground before the Queen.

"Speak, Harbona," said Vashti.

"The King hath spoken. He hath said, 'Call my Chamberlains, those who serve in my Palace, bid them summon Vashti the Queen. Place the crown of gold upon her head, and bring her forth so that the Princes, my friends, and the people — yea, all the people — may behold her beauty, and learn what manner of woman is she in whom the King delighteth.' Thus saith the King."

Vashti flushed suddenly, and her cheek as suddenly changed to white. "Say those words again," she ordered. "It may be that I have not heard aright."

The slave repeated them, concluding with the words, "Thus saith the King."

"Is the King drunk? Is the King foolish with wine that he should order this thing?" asked Vashti. "Have I angered the King that he should put me to this shame? Am I a woman of the people—one who is not ashamed to lift her veil to every stranger? Am I a woman of the Bazaar? Am I lower than the lowest of my own handmaidens?"

Replied the slave, "Thus and thus saith the King."

"Go!" cried Vashti. "Tell the King that I will not do this thing! I will not obey him to my shame!"

"Nay," replied the slave. "But thus saith the King. On my head be it."

"Thy head, slave? What care I for thy head?"

"It may be," said Melkah — all the girls were now grouped frightened round the Queen — "it may be that the King jests. Go back, Harbona — say that Vashti the Queen asks if this is in very truth the King's pleasure, or if the King jests. Go!"

"Go!" said Vashti, her eyes flashing. "Go! Ask not if the King jests — a sorry jest it were — but say that Vashti the Queen will not obey him in this thing. Go!"

The slave turned and departed.

All of them listened. There was no shouting—the revellers were strangely silent.

"They are waiting," said the old woman, "for the Queen. They are hungry for the beauty of the Queen."

Everything remained silent.

Then Vashti began to take off her braveries. She untwisted the gold thread which kept up her hair, so that it fell all around her like a garment; she took off her necklaces, bracelets, bangles,

and rings; she took off the splendid robe, and stood before them in a garb simple as that of her own handmaidens.

"Sisters," she said, "I am no longer Vashti the Queen, I am Vashti the handmaid; Vashti the servant; Vashti disgraced and despised. But I have not shown my face—oh! the shame of it—at the King's feast before the eyes of all those men."

The girls said nothing; they were too frightened for speech.

"Melkah," said Vashti, "that woman who was free. Tell me more of the woman who was free."

The curtains closed. The first act was finished. Then the actresses pushed through the curtains and came running into the larger room.

"Well, mother?" asked Francesca, pushing back her long hair. "How does it go so far?"

"Very well. Don't rush it. Your dance should have been prolonged, and in the song I would use that trick of all the voices together for the first verse as well as the last. 'Lo! she cometh,' first and third line. Your dresses are pretty, my children, and the dialogue is not too long. I congratulate you, Francesca, on the first act of your first play. Now let us have up the curtain for the second act."

Francesca and the other girl went behind the curtain. The rest all sat in front and increased the audience.

When the curtain was drawn aside the second time it showed a small room with a divan running along one side of it, and little other furniture except a shelf, on which stood a row of vials. An earthen pitcher of water was in a corner; the divan was covered with cushions; it was lighted by a window, over which hung a rough canvas, which kept out the light as well as the sun; an open doorway, also partly hung with canvas, opened upon a low veranda of thatch resting on two poles. Beyond the veranda was the crowded Bazaar; one heard, or seemed to hear, the confused murmur of bargains—the low voices of those who offered, and the shrill tones of those who refused. This was the house of Melkah, the wise woman of Syria, who told stories and sold charms and cured sick people and had many secrets, and was in great demand in harems.

Within the room Melkah herself lay huddled up in a corner of the divan—and leaning against the door-post was the tall figure

of a younger woman, veiled, though there were no men present, and it was a woman's room.

"It is five years," said this figure, and the audience started, because it was the unmistakable voice of Vashti—clear—musical—distinct—"five years, Melkah, since I fled from the Palace and sought refuge here. Better death—if I am taken—death in its worst form—than to be the servant of my successor. I found shelter with thee—in this cottage near the desert, where our only danger is from the lions and the serpents."

"Yes; it is five years. Does Vashti remember, and lament the past?"

"Not so. Thou hast taught me all thy secrets; they have forgotten me in the Palace; the King's Chamberlains go up and down the city, but they lift not a woman's veil. No one, I think, even in the Palace, would know me now. I am quite safe. And I am free—free—free. Why hast thou sent for me, Melkah?"

"Yestreen I was in the Harem, and I saw her—your successor, Vashti—Esther the Queen."

"You saw her! You saw Esther the Queen, in whom the King delighteth!" said Vashti, slowly.

"She sent for me. She would speak with me secretly. She knew me for a wise woman, one who could keep secrets as well as sell charms. 'Give me,' she said, 'the secret of love; I would fix the heart of the King.' Lo! I would not understand; and presently she confessed that the King is wearying of her, and she fears her beauty is waning and her power daily declines. So I said to her that I was a wise woman, truly, but not so wise as another whom I knew; that this was a great matter, and beyond me, but if she would come to this poor house, alone, she should see the other wise woman."

"She will come here—to see me—Esther the Queen—to see me!"

"Vashti, now is the hour of revenge! Give her that which will dry up her beauty suddenly—in a single day—so that she shall become old and withered even as I myself, Melkah the Syrian, who once was young and fair. This is thine hour, O Vashti!"

"Nay. But revenge—why should I take revenge upon this woman? She is a slave; I am free. She would be still a slave; I would still be free. Let her come."

Even as she spoke, a company of half a dozen Nubian slaves, guarding two or three women closely veiled, stopped at the house; and, leaving her attendants under the veranda, one woman raised the curtain and entered the dingy room.

Vashti dropped the canvas quite across the door. Then the three women were alone. Vashti lifted her veil. Her face was thinner than when she was the King's Favorite. She had stained it a light brown, so that she looked like a Hindoo woman, but she was taller than the women of that country. There were no gold ornaments on her neck or on her arms, which were also stained like the face.

The new-comer looked about her timidly. In the dim light she made out Melkah, but who was the other?

"Is this your wise woman, Melkah?" she asked.

"I am the wise woman," Vashti replied, in an assumed voice.

"You are young. I thought all wise women were old. When one is old—" She shuddered.

"It may be that I am older than I look. It may be that the bones of my husband lie buried with those of your great-grandfather, O Queen."

"You know me, then? But Melkah told you. Yes; I am that—that woman whom all the world calls happy. I am Esther the Queen. Alas! and my Lord the King wearies of my beauty."

"Your beauty fades, the King grows weary of your charms, your power is departing. What do you look for? She who reigns only by virtue of her beauty is thrust from the throne when that departs. You are the Queen of a year or two; then you must fain come down. You thought you would reign forever; then—you—why?"

"No, no. Yet a little longer—a year or two longer—only a year or two longer. It is not much to ask. After that, let me sink back into a corner of the Palace, and live neglected and die forgotten."

"You are of the Jewish race; they love power more than other people. It is dear to you that you can persuade the King to anything. They come to you with petitions, and you say: 'Wait, wait. What the King's Favorite can do I can do.' Then they praise your goodness. Oh! I know. Let me see this face that has gained favor with the King above all other women of his

Empire, such favor that it can overthrow great lords and save the lives of doomed people. Lift thy veil, Esther the Queen."

Esther obeyed. It was as if bright sunshine suddenly fell upon that dark room and lit up every corner of it. And at the sight of that face Vashti turned pale and trembled, for she saw and acknowledged the supremacy. As for herself, she was tall, cold, imperious, and proud. This woman was fair and gentle; soft and tender smiles played about her lips and lay in her soft and tender eyes. Her cheek was touched with a rosy red, a maiden blush —a childish blush. Her fair hair was rolled up on her lovely head.

"Can you help me?" asked Esther.

"Wait. Let me look at you. Let me think. There were other fair women in the Palace. Vashti—she who was Queen, she who refused to be shown to the Princes, she who disappeared —was slain, one thinks—she was said to be beautiful. Men change—their fancy changes from dark to fair. Why do you complain? It is the common lot."

"I do not complain. But I have been so happy—for five short years—and I love the King. To me he is always kind. Let him love me a little longer."

"Fool! It is not you that he loves—not Esther. It is your soft face and your blue eyes. Of Esther he knows nothing. He has never conversed with you. Well, one cannot keep your face from decay. Melkah will sell you cosmetics and things to smooth your skin and brighten your eyes."

"If it is only my face that the King loves, make him love that face a little longer."

"It is a fair face," she said, with the coldness of a woman who recognizes and acknowledges the beauty of another woman. She sees it; the thing moves her not; but she acknowledges it. "I have seen no fairer face even among the handmaidens of the Harem. It is a fair face, but it begins to fade. There are lines under the eyes; the cheeks grow thin; youth flies. A few more years and you will become like Melkah here."

The Queen's eyes filled with tears, but she said nothing.

"Take this bottle," said Vashti, giving her a small flask from the shelf. "Drink a few drops of this. It fires the blood and warms the heart and fills out the cheek. Drink of this, and for a few hours you shall seem young again. Take your year or two

more. Then all will vanish—youth and beauty, charm and love. Then the corner of the Harem and oblivion. Better let night and oblivion come at once; what matters an hour more of splendor?"

"No, no, no! let me reign still, if only for an hour longer. Let me be strong through love a little longer."

"Take it, then. Go, Queen of another hour!"

The visitor departed.

"See, Melkah," said Vashti, "the woman would still be loved. She thinks herself strong because she can coax and wheedle and persuade. Why, so is the worm strong that works its way through the earth; so is the child strong who persuades his mother. Strong through love? Nay, but women are strong through cunning and craft. They turn the love of their lords to compass their own ends. She strong through love? She is but a slave who has a hearing. Only those women are strong who are free. I am strong. She who belongs to a man loses all her strength, if ever she had any. I would be a queen and ruler, not a queen and favorite. I would sit upon a throne, and send this man here and that man there. I would lead armies. I would raise men to great dignity and depose princes. All I have admired I would do. Since I cannot, I sit here in this cottage, and I am a wise woman. That is something. Thanks to thy instructions, Melkah, I am a witch. Ah! hadst thou told me at the Harem all that I know now, I would have made the King my slave and been a Queen indeed. He should have crept after me like a dog—like the dog that he is. Well, but I am a witch. I can tell the future. I can read the past. I can tell what people think and what they design. Thou hast made me a witch, good Melkah; they are famous witches, those of thy country. Oh! that is nothing. I am the first woman in the world who has dared to disobey her Lord. I shall never be forgotten. In the days to come, when the multitude of men shall swarm round every coast and over all the isles, the name of Vashti shall be remembered and held in honor. Vashti, the first to rebel; Vashti, who refused to be the slave of man."

"Yet it is best for a woman to be a wife and a mother," said Melkah, still sticking to principle, though so wise a woman.

"Not for all women, good Melkah. There are some who are born to be free. They will not suffer us yet to do aught but what they call woman's work—that is, the meanest and the hardest

work—the spinning and the sewing and the cleaning. So am I fain to leave the magic arts—the wisdom of the woman—and to become a witch. There shall come a time when the free woman shall essay the wisdom and the handiwork of man. But I am satisfied; I am free—I am no longer the slave of man. The beasts and fruits and flowers, the love-songs, the gold bracelets, the dances of the Harem—what are all these, Melkah, to the free air which sweeps across the desert into my cottage beyond the city? What are the feasts of the Palace to the herbs of my garden and my simple food? What is the happiness of the King's Favorite, his favorite for an hour, compared with the happiness of my freedom? I am free. First of womankind, I have gained my freedom! I am free! First of womankind, I am free!"

Vashti threw out her arms; her veil, which had been thrown back like a hood, fell down to her feet; her hair fell with it. Her rich brown tresses fell like a long cloak around her; she pushed back some of them with her left hand. A ray of white sunlight gleamed suddenly through the coarse canvas of the window and touched her cheek with color, and made her eyes flash like stars. Then Melkah and the cottage disappeared suddenly; in fact, the scenery, with the old woman, was suddenly pulled away, and Vashti stood in the centre of the stage. But not alone. Behind her stood, row behind row, as if they were countless in numbers—there were really five or six—figures of veiled women. You can produce this effect by two sheets of mirror-glass set at an angle. On their arms were chains, some of gold and some of iron; but all carried chains. They stood with bowed heads in silence. Then they drew nearer and surrounded her, and fell upon their knees, still in silence, still with bowed heads.

"Ye are women," said Vashti, "therefore ye are in chains. Ye are slaves who are never set free. All other slaves shall be emancipated—the prisoners of war, the negro slaves, the slaves of the soil, the slaves of the Nile, the slaves of the city; the last emancipation of all shall be the emancipation of woman from man. Mothers and foremothers of slaves! Have patience: the time of freedom shall surely some day come."

Then they tossed their arms so that the chains made music to their voices as they cried, "Vashti the Queen! Vashti the Rebel! Teach us to be free!"

And with these words the curtain fell. The play was ended.

CHAPTER II

AFTER THE PLAY

The audience clapped her hands gently. The curtain was pulled up again, and the ex-Queen stepped forward. The mothers of all the slaves to come had disappeared—chains and all.

"Well, mother, how did it go? Pretty well?"

Madame Elveda looked up smiling. "The actress wants her praise? The author wants her applause? My dear, I am not an impartial critic. Yet I really think it went very well. The last tableau is a little risky, but if you have carried your audience with you in the first act, that, too, will go. Of course, I do not believe that a dull audience would be moved by the piece at all."

"There must be some stupid persons present, I suppose. Yet we do our best to keep the Stupids out."

"Let us distinguish, Francesca. There is such a thing as an audience too clever or too critical. Jealousy is said to be not unknown even among poets. And there is a stupidity which admires without understanding. They weep, being unmoved; they laugh, not being compelled to laugh, but because others do. But they admire what they are told to admire. Always, my dear, try to have a good leaven of the commonplace. Let there be a few Stupids."

The next night was that of the performance. The audience proved appreciative. The Stupids admired and applauded without being told when the applause should come in. The others were not poets or dramatists, and therefore were not made jealous by the success of the piece; nor were they, for the most part, over-critical. And the piece appealed strongly to the professions, prejudices, faiths, convictions, and doctrines of the people present, for they were all disciples of Emancipation, in whatever form this agreeable doctrine might be presented. We are familiar with many forms in which the Cause is submitted to the world. It has its political, its educational, its social, its religious side, each

with many branches. I think they were all represented in this drawing-room. And there were present many young persons belonging to that large class which is possessed by a youthful admiration of new things (which are generally the old things already tried and condemned) and a desire for change. This disposition is partly due to the restlessness and impatience of youth, partly to generosity and a sense of justice. Sometimes it is due to self-seeking, which perceives opportunities in change.

The players surpassed themselves. Before the crowded house they acted far better than before the audience of one. They played—which is the great thing—as if they really believed in their parts; they hovered about the Favorite as if they loved her; they wept when she went into disgrace; the song and the dance were encored. Then all the maidens together—the black "Chamberlain" was the only man—made up a group of very remarkable beauty. Among the young men standing at the back might have been heard words—frivolous words—such as "Houri," "Odalisque," "Royal Mash," "Pearl of the Harem," and so forth. Such a piece naturally calls forth many pretty, witty, audacious things that must not be said aloud. But they were all complimentary to the attractions of the company.

Lastly, the piece was mounted with great care and without any regard to the cost of things. The dresses were lovely, the scenery well painted, the properties very good—and the stage management was professional.

They called for the Queen. The curtain rose and showed the Queen with her maidens. They called for the author. But she did not appear.

Madame Elveda rose from her chair. "The play is over," she said. "The girls have gone to change. We are back again in the Cromwell Road. I hope it has been a pleasing play."

She put up her pince-nez and looked around the room. Yes; it had been a pleasing play. Everybody's face showed interest; it is impossible to assume the appearance of interest; polite people at private theatricals always try, but seldom succeed; the difference between assumed interest and the interest commanded by the play itself is too great to escape the attention of the most careless. Everybody's face showed surprise and a little excitement. They had all been disappointed; they came expecting something feebly fatuous—an amateur play—and they had found

something strong. The play over, the curtain down, they turned and began to murmur detached words to each other, the words which come first to the uncritical mind before it has been taught what to say by the Criticaster, who for our happiness is never absent on any occasion.

Madame Elveda was satisfied; nobody was yawning, nobody sighed with the relief of the finish. She dropped her glasses and prepared to talk about it.

"It was wonderful"—a well-known dramatic critic led off the congratulations—"perfectly wonderful. It was a sermon—such as one might expect in the house of such a Leader as yourself, Madame Elveda. No other house in London could have presented such a play. And your daughter—wonderful! Her gestures—her voice—all trained."

"Girls are all wonderful," replied the mother, "so long as they continue to be amateurs. When they go on the stage professionally we begin to find out the faults. My daughter was taught to act, however. She has played a good deal. I have always held that acting should be taught—like music or painting or languages—to all girls who have any natural aptitude."

"At all events, her masters cannot complain of their pupil."

Madame Elveda smiled. She was now a stately matron, handsome still in spite of forty summers; of ampler dimensions than when she made that little arrangement with her husband; a woman with a dignified manner, which could be cold and could be gracious. She was dressed much as she was on that occasion when her husband left her, in a noble crimson velvet, and she wore a good deal of gold. Was she not an Oriental? Are not Moors and Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians, Algerines, Levantines, Turks, all fond of gold ornaments?

"But the atmosphere," continued the critic, "how was that contrived? Across the footlights came the very fragrance—the breath of the walled and fenced garden of the King, the perfumes of the Harem."

"It was partly in the room before the play began," said another man. "From this room to the fenced garden of the King is but a step—we were prepared for the Palace of Shushan; we were already in the City of Morocco."

The room, indeed, looked as Oriental in its fittings as one can expect in a London house. A broad divan ran round two sides;

at the end was a small latticed gallery, reminding one of Cairo; colored lamps hung from the ceiling, glass vessels of strange hue and shape stood about, cushions were strewn over the divans, there were little tables for coffee, rugs of curious colors were stretched upon the polished floor, guitars and mandolins were lying about, tapestry instead of pictures hung upon the wall, with weapons—swords and cimeters and daggers; there was not even a piano-forte in the room. It was a room full of color—a room of the Alhambra.

"Yes," said Madame Elveda. "It pleases us to remember that we are Orientals. What is the good of Eastern blood unless one can feel one's self sometimes a Moorish woman? Francesca made a good Vashti because she is herself of the Mughrebbin—the western Arabs—a descendant of Ishmael."

"Or of his half-brother," murmured that sympathetic noun of multitude, More-than-One. But we are a polite people. More-than-One did not give loud utterance to this epigram.

And then they all began to talk together. The dramatic critic had struck the note; it was one of rapturous admiration. The advanced ladies present showed their approval of the sentiments of the play by using few words, but those were words of strength. The Truth, they said, cannot possibly be presented in ways too varied. By their own essays, articles, pamphlets, lectures, appeals, histories, researches, expositions, revelations, inquiries, dissections, and teachings the slavery of woman had been set forth abundantly, clearly, and strikingly, with force and originality. Let it now be presented, for those who do not read the Higher Literature, in dramatic shape. The world—which is well known to listen with eager ears whenever these ladies speak—was to be congratulated on the appearance of a woman dramatist. Who said that women never could write a play? This play, perhaps the best that the century had produced, was actually too good for the London stage; one could not conceive of a company fit to play it, or an audience fit to witness it. Very strong language, indeed. The comments of the men were perhaps less hearty, for, while they spoke very warmly of the performance, they seemed to receive the teaching of the piece without enthusiasm. They praised the dresses and the actresses. As to the doctrine, they said nothing. Yet the Subjection of the Sex is no new matter of discussion.

In a few minutes the actresses appeared, their eyes bright, their

cheeks flushed with the reception of the play. No success in the world is more delightful, one is assured, than success on the stage. Francesca had changed the robes of the Queen for a white dress, but with touches of color. Her rich brown hair was done up again as it had been arranged for the Queen, rolled up high and kept in place by bands of very small gold coins. Like all her sisters of the present day, she was tall of stature; but she was not slender; rather she possessed a full and well-formed figure. Her forehead was low, the hair falling down almost to her eyebrows; she looked more beautiful off the stage than on, her blue eyes full of light, full of imagination; features sharp, clear cut, and delicate belonged to an ample cheek and a large head; a short upper lip with firm mouth, and a full and rounded chin, indicated her courage and resolution. She wore her dress high; like her mother, she proclaimed her Oriental origin by the gold which adorned her—gold ear-rings set with diamonds, a gold necklace with a jewelled cameo, gold bracelets round her arms above her elbows, a belt of dead gold confined her waist. "She looks a Queen still," murmured an elderly man to his neighbor, "more than ever a Queen—an Eastern Queen. Her name is not Vashti the Assyrian, but Dido the Phœnician. I never understood the face of Dido until now. As now, so then she looked; so animated, with eyes so sparkling, while Æneas told his tale."

Everybody pressed forward with congratulations and praises. Francesca received them graciously, smiling with that lingering queenliness in her manner—one cannot assume and shake off the Queen in a moment—which was not unbecoming even in this modern guise.

Among those who crowded round her was a young man, who differed chiefly from other young men of the period—they are terribly like each other—in a brighter look and a more animated manner. He laughed pleasantly as he spoke—pleasantly and naturally and genially, and his voice was pleasant.

"May my humble voice swell the general chorus?" he asked. "It is a chorus of gratitude and surprise."

"I prefer the latter," said Francesca. "Gratitude is too soon over, and then conscience whispers to us that it ought to linger. Now surprise does sometimes linger as a memory."

"The lingering memory of Vashti the Queen means gratitude. We shall all be grateful for the rest of our natural life. I never

saw a Harem before, not even in Constantinople. Most interesting it was. But perhaps I hardly quite caught the spirit of the thing, if one may criticise—"

"Pray criticise," Francesca replied, some of the coldness of the author suddenly appearing. "Say it was dreadful—crude—everything that is horrid."

"Indeed, I shall say nothing of the kind. Why, Francesca, as if you would write anything horrid! As if I could say that anything you wrote was crude!"

"Do not flatter, Harold."

"I would only remark that in my poor opinion Vashti would have done well to await further developments. In the record you have followed she does not run away."

"She is not mentioned again; she vanishes. Perhaps she lived on in a corner of the Harem, disgraced and forgotten; perhaps she was murdered; perhaps she ran away. I chose to make her run away."

"Dramatically, you were right. Seriously, Francesca, you have never shown your power so strongly; there are few other girls, indeed, who could write such a piece, and still fewer who could also play the principal part in it. I congratulate you."

"I was in earnest; that was the reason."

"Yes, yes." He smiled. "I perceived certain influences between the lines. Yet you can keep your independence, if you please, Francesca." He lowered his voice. "And you can have in addition—"

"What, Harold?" She lifted her eyes sharply and meaningly.

"If you please to take it," he whispered, "the thing for which other girls will sometimes surrender even their independence in exchange."

She turned away abruptly and joined another group.

"This little play is really clever, don't you think, for a girl of twenty?" The question was asked by an elderly gentleman—one of the Stupids whom Francesca would keep out. "There were a few touches in it that struck me as perhaps original, though rather bold." This kind of criticism always stamps the Stupid.

"At first sight," replied the person addressed, a lady no longer young and well known in the world for her efforts in the cause of Female Suffrage, "it may have the appearance of originality. But when we consider the mother—and when we think how the

girl has been brought up—one understands that she has put into the play nothing more than the ideas she has learned."

"Shakespeare could do no more," said the Stupid, who had heard this said more than once.

"I believe," the lady replied, sarcastically, "that there is a difference between Shakespeare and Francesca Elveda. What does she tell us? What she has learned every day from her mother. The social system in every age is framed for the submission of woman; literature is full of it, poetry is full of it, history is full of it. No other importance given to woman than that attached to her beauty. In no church or creed is she allowed to be priest or preacher, where they rail off a place and call it holy she must not enter; she must not even sing in the choir; the higher education has been hitherto refused her; personal freedom is refused her; she is kept under watch and ward—all these points are household words to Francesca. It is very easy for her to put such things in a play. Besides, we do not know what help she got from her mother, or from that Mr. Harold Alleyne, whom they encourage to hang about. I don't call it fair to any young man. He may get a peerage, you see—and that's the reason. Mother and daughter are very likely agreed that a coronet would be very becoming."

"Humph! I hear they call themselves Moors. But surely—"

"They come from the Lord knows where, and the Papa Elveda was the Lord knows who. They are Jews—look at the mother—as plain as can be written on any face. Hush!" She looked up as her hostess approached. "Dear Madame Elveda, this has been a great surprise and a great treat. You are indeed to be congratulated. Francesca played the part as if she meant it."

"She did mean it. My child, Lady Risinge, has been devoted—trained—to the Cause from infancy. I might myself have done something for the Equality of Woman had it not been for the responsibility of her training. Francesca will, I trust, supplement my work."

"She can never do more than you have done. Your great work—"

"My book speaks only to those who read it. Francesca, I hope, will speak in a more attractive way. I speak to hundreds—she must speak to thousands. The printed book plays its part,

but there comes a time when the Voice must be heard. Francesca will be, I trust, the High Priestess of the Cause."

She passed on.

"High Priestess!" echoed the lady. "That slip of a girl!"

"Well," said the Stupid, "the play was clever — and it was original. Perhaps, here and there, rather bold—rather bold."

"Oh! But the girl has had it all drummed into her."

"What does that matter? She does make it seem hard on the women, doesn't she? Rather bold, though—rather bold. But Vashti was a Queen. She could hire nurses. Ordinary women must look after the babies."

"Babies, indeed!" which ended that little talk.

All the people in the room, some by twos and threes, some in little groups, took up the theme. Slavery in love? The younger men, callow yet (we may hope), and inexperienced in woman's heart and woman's ways, tossed little *ballons d'essai* in the air, where they mostly disappeared unnoticed. The girls who were advanced spoke in general terms, and laid down abstract propositions, and were very courageous indeed; the time was come for perfect equality in love as in intellect; more than equality for woman they did not at present claim. The girls who were not advanced listened pensively, and either whispered and murmured to each other or looked things at each other—whispers and looks alike meant the same thing. "Oh! dear—no. In actual life this won't work." The elder married ladies could not for a moment admit that love was slavery. On the contrary, they maintained—even to the face of Mr. Henpecked and Mr. Henpecker, who were both in the room—that marriage consisted in perfect equality. The elder men, for the most part, stood in the outer circle or in the doorways. They had gone beyond the stage of pure speculation; they should have stood up for the actualities. They laughed, however. "It pleases the girls," they said, and laughed again. They began sentences with, "Once I knew a girl," or, "There was a woman once," or, "I remember when I was at Malta." The rest was confided to the ear of the listener. The philosopher, after listening to all, and overhearing the whispers, would have summed up with the remark that young men expect too much of love; that girls fear too much of love; and that the elder sort are for the most part disappointed with love, which is as it should be in all things human. For there is

no favoritism with the gifts of the gods, but all alike smack of vanity.

"Harold"—the people were all going away, and Francesca found an opportunity. "I want to talk—seriously."

"When you please, Francesca. The more serious the better."

"It concerns nothing less than our future relations."

"So I understand."

"It will depend upon you whether we are to continue on the old footing. Friends are not to be made every day, Harold; we have been friends so long—"

"If it only depends upon me—"

"Then will you come—say to-morrow morning? We can talk seriously. We shall be quite alone." She spoke as if to be quite alone with her would be a coldly intellectual treat.

"I will come. We will talk. Good-night, O Rebel Queen!"

CHAPTER III

AN EXPECTANT LOVER

Two young men—one of them the young man called Harold Alleyne—were sitting late in the club smoking-room.

"Yes," said one, "I don't often go to that kind of thing, but I confess that I was interested. The performance was very far above the average amateur business, and the play was fresh, and it seemed to suit the place. Everything looked Oriental, both on and off the stage, except the chairs. It was like a seraglio without the Sultan. I was afraid he would find out that we were in his Harem. I looked about for the black man with the bowstring. Moorish people, I think you said? Very odd! I never heard of any Moors in society before. One might as well expect to meet a dervish. Madame is a very stately person, standing on a dignity Mauresque-Jewish, I should have thought, from a certain kind of a sort of a something hovering about her mouth. But one may be mistaken. Elveda—is it a Moorish name or a Spanish name?"

"The Moors have a Jewish look, I suppose," said Harold. "These people have been Spaniards for generations, but they claim Moorish descent. As we haven't time to investigate their genealogy, we may as well accept their own statement. Why not Moors? If not Moors, what matter?"

"Why not, indeed? Have you known them long?"

"Yes; seven or eight years. I met them first in the Pyrenees. Madame Elveda found me lying in a fever at a wretched little Fonda. I suppose I might have died if she had not chanced upon me and nursed me with the greatest kindness. When I got better we went to Biarritz, where we stayed at the same hotel and made excursions. She is the best of women, if you don't mind a certain kind of crankiness. After that I continued to correspond with them. They remained abroad till three years ago, when they came here, and Francesca went to Newnham. As for the

crankiness, of course you know Madame Elveda's position in the Women's Right's business. She is a Leader, and she has a Mission. She proclaims the equality of women, and she belongs to every one of the associations for changing women into men."

"Yet they remain women."

"And yet again they have done a great deal. Why shouldn't women be educated, if they like, as well as men? However, it is too late to talk of women's wrongs. Francesca has now returned home. I believe she has a latch-key; her mother is not to inquire into her occupations or her companions; she is quite free. And she is going to make her mother's house a place of great liveliness. She told me so. She likes liveliness. She likes dancing and singing and feasting and laughing. She is fair and she is frank and she is free."

"I suppose she is passing rich. If I were not engaged, I would myself—perhaps—"

"I don't know how much they've got, or how they got it—or whether it is land or shares—whether it was trade or inheritance."

"Diamonds, perhaps. They kept some of the remainder stock."

"Perhaps. They live as if there was no limit to the income."

"Is it not rather absurd for such a girl—so lovely, so clever, so rich—to be talking about the slavery of love? We shall hear, some day, that she is going to marry an Earl. She will be a Countess. Why not yourself, Harold? Go in and win. You are more than half-way to an earldom as it is. Even supposing that your uncle should turn up, you can easily get another title when you are married to such a rich girl. You can become Earl of Moorland, say, or Lord Old Jewry."

Harold shook his head. "When I knew her first she was a gawky girl of twelve or so, all elbows. Nothing good about her but her eyes and her hair. But she was masterful even then, and resolute, and free, always questioning, never submissive to authority in any shape; even then contemptuous to the submissiveness of other women—never tolerant of pretence."

"Well, you need not pretend, if you come to that."

"As she was then, so she is now, only more so. And a jolly girl, too, easily amused, very fond of everything good—I believe she knows claret—I am certain that she knows champagne. But you must treat her as an equal. And if you try love-making

—if you even begin to turn the talk into a personal or sentimental channel—she freezes. Worse than that, she scents the approach of Love while he is yet invisible and afar off; she catches a glance of admiration; she feels the hunger of a longing eye; she reads the hesitating thought; she begins to freeze before you have made up your mind how it might best be put, whether in words or in sighs or in hand-clasps. That girl lives upon an iceberg; she wears a belt stuck full of icicles as if they were naked daggers."

"What was the paternal Moor? A Patriarch numbering his cattle by the thousand? Did he live in a tent upon the Atlas Mountains?"

"I have told you that I don't know. You can't ask a girl what her father was. Francesca has his portrait; once she showed it to me. She only shows it to her friends, and then as a favor. I was allowed to gaze upon it. It was shortly after she had signally defeated me in a certain argument. The sense of superiority made her gracious."

"You are *ami de famille;* you come and go as you please in the house. What more can you want? You've got all the chances there are."

"We are excellent friends, but, as yet, nothing more. Of course she knows, she must know—"

"What can she ask for better than yourself, especially if the earldom comes off? Why, you are young and of good family and of good temper, and you are scientific and a Fellow of your college and everything. If we talk of money, you are not a penniless adventurer, and, if the title falls in, there are big estates. Harold, you might marry anybody."

"If she could conceive for a man an overweening respect for his abilities and character, she might, perhaps. . . . She wants character in a man—always character."

"Send her to me. I will give you a character."

"I mean force—personal force. I may be pretty good in a laboratory, but outside it I am a quiet kind of creature. Besides, she knows me too well; we have talked to each other too long; we are dangerously fraternal in our communications; I am not a mystery to her. If I were introduced to her to-morrow for the first time, I should have a better chance."

"I don't know. I was introduced to her two hours ago, and

I feel that I should not have the least chance. She only looked at me once. No character about me, I suppose. Don't you give in, man. Sit down quiet and watch."

Harold nodded, left the club, and drove home. The appointment for to-morrow made him thoughtful. For he guessed very well what would be the purport of the communication that Francesca was about to make to him. He had not spoken one single direct word of love to her, but he had spoken to her mother; so much was due to the position; and whether her mother had spoken to her or not, the girl understood what was in his mind. Maidens not nearly so clever as Francesca are able to read a man's thoughts—when they go off in this direction—with surprising swiftness and accuracy. And certainly a girl does not ask a man to meet her in order to say, "You have not made love to me, but I am going to say that I shall have great pleasure in offering you this six-and-a-quarter hand." Not so. But such a girl as Francesca may very well ask a man to meet her in order to say: "I understand that you are in love with me. Pray get out of love as soon as you can." And that, he knew very well, was what Francesca was going to say to him on the morrow.

Before going to bed he opened a drawer and took out a bundle of letters. Some of them were as much as nine years old. They were tied up in order, and evidently kept with care. They all began "Dear Harold," and all ended with "Your affectionate Francesca." The girl who wrote those letters had begun them when she was twelve, and she still continued them. She was always his affectionate Francesca, and he was always her dear Harold. She still wrote to him in this endearing style, and yet she was going to say to him, "The next step, the obvious step—the step you are now contemplating—must never be taken." He knew it; he was quite sure of it. He turned over the letters, opening one here and another there, reading bits. "I remember getting this letter," said Harold, "six years ago. Poor child! It was a strange education—

"'I had not even school-fellows; my mother taught me till I was fourteen, and then I had masters and governesses. My old nurse, Melkah, was the only person who treated me like a child. She told me stories of her own people, her Syrian people—all kinds of stories. Otherwise I should have become a walking encyclopædia of science and art. Melkah is a wonderful woman.'

"She was a grave girl, then," Guy reflected, "grave and questioning. I shall never forget her face when I made the first joke, I believe, that she ever heard. Her mother could never make a joke, or laugh at one. No woman of dignity makes jokes. I taught her to laugh—that is something, even if I could not teach her to love. Laughter and love ought to be cousins; they are both young and both happy."

And here was another letter: "It seems to me"—she was then fifteen—"that the only real change I get is when I sit down to write to you. I see Harold then—my one friend—sitting in his rooms at Cambridge all among the books and bottles." (Harold was a chemist, and therefore a many-bottle man.) "I see him take up my letter and say, 'My little friend; I will read it quietly this evening, after dinner.' Then, when I have refreshed my eyes with looking at you across the thousand miles between us, I look at your photograph, and I am inspired—yes, inspired—to begin. All the rest of the day I am in the hands of governesses and masters. If we go out for a walk, or for a ride, it is in the way of education. I go from one lesson to another, and from one master to another. I mix up accomplishments, art, science, and learning. It is all the same to me whether I am learning mathematics or dancing, rhetoric or music. I suppose I shall some day be a finished young lady. And then? What then? Oh, Harold! what has fate in store for me before I die? I want to see and to know and to enjoy everything."

He took up another letter.

"I have been to see the Old Jewish Quarter," she wrote from Venice. "There are still some Jews living there. I do not like modern Jews; they are my cousins, but I am ashamed of them, they grub so much for money, and their women are kept in such dreadful subjection. My mother often talks about the Jewish women; she has known many. Since I have grown to years of discretion she has talked to me a great deal about the condition of women. She takes me about to factories and places where they work. She makes me mark their oppression everywhere; she is always speaking and thinking about it."

Then she wrote from Damascus:

"We have paid a visit to the Pasha's Harem. The ladies are beautifully dressed; they offered us sweets and coffee, and asked us a great many questions. But oh! the dreary, dismal prison life

that it is! The futile, idle, purposeless life that it is! What a degradation of life it is! To be locked up in a cage, and forbidden to work at anything, and to be beautifully dressed!"

Then she wrote from the Desert:

"We are ten days south of Damascus," she said; "we are right in the middle of the Syrian Desert. My mother, Melkah, and I are in the hands of a tribe. We have bought the Sheikh. He has had so much money down, and is to have so much more when he brings us back in safety. In return we are to have three months of the Desert. It is lovely. We live in tents. It is exactly like the life my forefathers led. I remember that I am the daughter of Ishmael, the grand warrior of the Desert. He was a silent man, I am sure, who inherited the wisdom of his father and meditated in the night under the grand stars in the clearest sky you can imagine. If we stay here long enough I shall become an astrologer like my other cousins the Chaldæans. Everything is exactly the same now as then except that the spear has been replaced by the gun. And they now have coffee. Their women are slaves always—everywhere the same story. Man is the master; woman is the slave. Man must command; woman must obey."

"M'yes," said Harold, "I, too, have sojourned in the Desert."

Harold folded up the letters. "It has been a delightful study," he said, "of a most interesting feminine soul. I know her through and through, because I have watched her grow. But it will prove a pleasure dearly bought if familiarity excludes love." He put the letters back in the drawer, and sought forgetfulness in the usual way.

CHAPTER IV

A THING IMPOSSIBLE

MADAME ELVEDA'S study, a large and lofty room—every room in this house was large and lofty—on the ground-floor, was furnished with a splendid severity. There were the essentials of a study and little more; books—solid-looking books—on shelves nearly up to the ceiling; a ladder-stair on wheels; a dozen electric lights hanging from the ceiling so as to form a geometrical pattern—the arrangement of the electric light is at present elementary, yet a few years and we shall see marvels of beauty and effect produced by the little yellow arc; a bust or two above the shelves; an engraving over a strictly severe mantel; one or two vases, with a piece of Venetian glass on a bracket, between the windows; light and feathery curtains; a soft carpet; a large writing-table; two or three small tables with books of reference and atlases; a revolving stand of books—occasional books, books of the day, magazines of the more "thoughtful" kind; two or three easy-chairs for the fireside. All these things were duly established in Madame Elveda's study. Nothing "feminine;" no "work" lying about. And the writing-table was of the very largest kind that is made—I think twelve feet long—the chairs were solid, the books were all big and well bound, the very paper-knives, inkstands, paper-cases, and blotting-pads were large and solid.

In this room were conducted the councils of the Inner Ring or Circle. Do not believe that the Fenians alone have an Inner Ring; every cause, every "movement," has its Inner Ring. This was the place where the Female Inner Rings met—consisting of the ladies who wanted to sit on County Councils, those who wanted to storm the School Boards, those who wanted the suffrage, those who wanted to promote the Equality of the Sex; they all came here. The Cause wants rich people; here was a rich woman ready to give them money and a central place.

Naturally, this lady carried on an extensive correspondence; she had two short-hand and type-writing clerks—girls, of course, and lucky girls, because they got the pay of men. These young ladies attended every morning and wrote her letters. In the afternoon the Inner Circles met.

Madame Elveda did not speak in public, nor did she often address the public by means of a magazine. Her position as a leader was assured by her great book on the *Present Condition of Women*, already spoken of. It was felt in some quarters that the derisive criticism which is so plentifully heaped upon some ladies who speak spared this lady, who, to say the truth, never made herself ridiculous at all, but contented herself with being reputed an encyclopædia on the condition of women in all countries, the working of Labor and other Acts, and all questions of employment, pay, hours, and treatment.

In this room this lady also carried on the management, without anybody's help, of affairs which even an American millionaire would think of some importance. That is to say, she was supposed to carry on those affairs. Really, nobody knew anything about her income at all. She lived in a house for which she paid eight hundred a year rent; she had servants, carriages, horses, all the appearance of wealth; she certainly belonged to that small class whose income is reckoned by tens of thousands, not by the modest unit which bounds the hopes of so many.

One may add, to show that this lady was a recognized leader, that most of the thoughtful women who wished to write a thoughtful paper in a thoughtful magazine found it desirable to write to Madame Elveda for advice. She never failed to provide them with the crib necessary for thoughtful ladies. This once in hand, the paper became as thoughtful as anything.

Outside the study, on the lowest step of the broad stairs, sat the old serving-woman, Melkah, the Syrian. She was wrapped from head to foot in a mantle of some kind which covered her head. She had also thrown it, in some mysterious way, across the lower half of her face so that nothing was visible of her except her two dark and cavernous eyes, which gleamed like lights far off. She sat crouched and huddled up, waiting. The people in the household were accustomed to find her in unexpected places. Melkah could do as she pleased. If an assistant housemaid or a scullery-maid should presume to go and sit for hours

on the principal stairs—why, everybody knew what would happen.

At the first stroke of eleven by the hall clock there was a knock at the door. It was Harold Alleyne, come to keep his appointment.

Melkah, at sight of him, rose up and walked feebly across the hall to meet him.

"You have come to see the child, Harold?" She spoke in a pretty foreign accent. In this house it was as if everything was grafted English on a foreign stock. "Francesca waits for you. She is grown now; she should have a lover. Eh? I knew what you would say. Eh! eh! eh!" partly she laughed and partly she coughed. "Now listen! She will first say No—Eh? —No—no—no! She will shake her head. She will have no husband—no lover. No—no—no! The lovers may go to the devil—all but you! And you she loves. Eh? I know. The old woman knows; she watches; she sees what is invisible, and she hears what is not spoken. Eh? The child will say No, because her mother has told her things—they are foolish things. You wait, I say. She loves you, but she does not know it. Some day she will say Yes—yes—yes. You wait. When she says No, you may laugh. But take care. Do not say things that will anger her. Do not fall into anger yourself. A girl is a fool who says No to her lover. Yet you must not be angry. This child will never love any but one man. I know her kind. She could never love any but one man. That is you—you yourself. Do not anger her, therefore; make it easy for her to change her mind. He who wants the dog says to him, 'Good-morning, O my uncle!' Say to yourself, 'This foolishness is her mother's doing.' Then leave her with a laugh. Let not the eye discover what pains the heart. Laugh, and come away! Do you listen?"

"I listen, Melkah, and I will obey."

"Go, then, with the blessing of the Lord! Stay! I had forgotten. Madame wants to see you first. She is in her study—she wants to see you. When she has done I will call the child." Melkah led the way, which Harold knew perfectly well, and threw open the door for him.

The lady was at her table, dictating a letter to her type-writer. She was never one of those ladies who permit themselves to be seen in any costume, at any time of the day, but that which is

stately. She was always the great lady. In her morning dress of flowered foulard—gray, I think, with black flowers—she looked quite as dignified as in her crimson velvet of the evening. The table before her was covered with papers and bundles.

"Francesca told me you were coming," she said, giving him her hand. "I am always glad to see you, as you know, my dear Harold. Rachel"—she nodded to her type-writer—"you need not stay any longer this morning. Now we are alone. Some people talk in the presence of their type-writers. It is a mistake; they have tongues as well as ears; we must remember that. Service is always curious. They are not deaf and dumb machines. Now, Harold, we are alone; sit down and let us talk."

Harold observed an unusual hesitation in the speaker, who was, as a rule, so perfectly assured in her manner. She spoke nervously, and played with a penholder. But what she said was to the point and unmistakable.

"Francesca will see you immediately. I fear that you may be hurt at what she has to say. For your sake, I am sorry. For her, even, I am sorry, because if she were to marry anybody, there is no one to whom I would give her with greater confidence. But you cannot have known her and me so long without knowing that I nourish great ambitions for her. No; let me speak first. They are more than ambitions. She is consecrated from infancy to the advocacy of a great Cause. I expect her to give everything to that Cause—life, love, wealth, thought. Marriage is impossible for such a girl. Marriage is absorbing and selfish. Even in my own case—a widow for twenty years—what am I? Francesca's mother—nothing more."

"Could you be anything better?"

Madame laughed pleasantly. "There spoke the lover. Well, I do not complain. Perhaps I think so well of Francesca that I am content to have lived for her."

"Then there has been your book—your great book."

"The book represents the time that my husband would have claimed for himself had he remained with me. It means the society, the friends, the home, that I lost when I separated from him. Well, Harold, you are a lover—"

"If I may be allowed that title of honor."

"You love my daughter—Francesca knows this. She will tell you presently what she thinks. It is for her to decide. Under-

stand that she is perfectly free. If she asks my advice I will offer it, otherwise not. She is perfectly free in this as in any other matter."

"I can ask for nothing more."

"As for me, I have asked you to see me first because I want you to understand that, whatever be Francasca's answer, we—both of us—value your friendship above that of any one else in the world." She had now recovered from her temporary embarrassment, and she spoke in her usual queenly manner, as if she understood the value of her words.

"So far as I can judge, from kindness heaped up and overflowing—" Harold began.

"My dear Harold, that is nonsense. Kindness? What can we do for you? Can we give you Society? We do not belong to Society; we are foreigners. Can we give you Position? We have none, and you have your own. Advancement? You are making it for yourself. There is nothing that we can give you except our affection; that you have already. If I wished for a son-in-law—which, frankly, I do not—you are the son-in-law whom I should desire."

Harold murmured something to the effect that he was touched. He was indeed; any young man would be touched by such a speech even from an old friend—the older the friend the more readily is one touched.

"You are a very handsome young man, Harold," the lady continued, seriously; "I wonder why women do not write verses about the beauty of young men; they would if they would give up imitating men, and write out of their own hearts. Some people say that girls don't care about beauty in a man. Rubbish! They can love a man who is not beautiful—at least some of them do—I don't think I could. My own husband was a very handsome man—in my style, not yours. They all like a man to be handsome. You are much more handsome now, Harold, than you were at eighteen, when we had the good-fortune to meet you at the little fonda in the Pyrenees."

"When you found me in a fever and nursed me through delirium for three weeks—you yourself—not your servants for you."

"It was our great good-fortune. Well, Francesca knows you so well that, perhaps, she never thinks of your face and figure.

Perhaps, however, she does. I acknowledge that you have every advantage. You are well born, good-looking, and young; you are the probable heir to a peerage; you have an income of your own; you are a man of honor, character, and loyalty; I really do not think that any woman could desire a better husband."

"As for my peerage, that is just as far off as ever."

"It is possible, however. And then you are clever. You have already made your mark in science. Considering all these things, and how they would weigh with some girls, I can still leave the decision in Francesca's hands."

"One moment," said Harold. "You spoke of dedicating her to your Cause. Of course I have known all along what your ambitions are. But—forgive me, I may be wrong—I have not yet perceived any sign of these ambitions in Francesca. Dreamy, thoughtful, artistic—are these the qualities required for an orator and a leader?"

"I look for a time when Francesca will understand the full meaning of her education. Then she will leap into her place like one inspired. My friend, you know exactly what I think and what I hope. Do not make the girl's task too difficult for her!" She touched his fingers and left him.

Then Francesca herself appeared, dressed simply in a light pink cotton frock with lace round the neck and lace ruffles at the wrist and a lace front. She looked dainty and ethereal. Some girls have the art of seeming to be whatever the dress suggests in the direction of airiness and unearthliness. Her cheeks, usually pale, were touched with a glow of color called forth by the delicacy of the situation; the kind of glow it was which in such a complexion seems to lie deep beneath the surface. She was Oriental always; in whatever dress she appeared one instinctively expected gold chains, rings, and bangles. Yet she wore none of these decorations, only her plain cotton frock, which a milkmaid might have worn, save for the lace. She was no longer Vashti the Rebel Queen. A simple maiden of Paradise, perhaps—Paradise, we know, was an Oriental garden. She stood for a moment at the door collecting herself.

"I thank you, Harold, for coming," she began, stiffly.

"You ordered me to come. Is not that enough?"

"No compliments, please, Harold."

"You have to tell me something—something so important as

to prevent the calamity of a break between us. What can that be? Such a calamity, Francesca, must be averted at any cost."

"I will tell you directly. It is difficult; give me a moment. I want to say something clearly and once for all, and—very clearly—and—kindly, Harold, because we have been—and, I hope, are always to be—such true friends."

"You cannot be otherwise than kind."

"It is about myself."

"You cannot possibly tell me too much about yourself."

"You have always taken such a kindly interest in me ever since I have known you, and you are my oldest friend. I have known you so much longer than those girls."

"Do not hurry, Francesca. Tell me at your own convenience. Write it if you prefer."

"No; I could not write such a thing."

She took her mother's chair. Harold resumed the low chair. They sat in silence for a while. Then he began upon something else. "That play of yours," he said—"that play of Vashti the Queen—I liked it hugely. As for you, it was Vashti herself that one saw. No finished actress could play the part better—or look it better."

"I *was* Vashti," she said, simply.

"You were," he replied, quietly. "I understood so much."

Then there was silence again. Twice she made as if she was going to speak, and broke off. At last she did begin—very much as her mother had begun. "Harold," she said, abruptly, "we have been friends for nine years, I think—nearly half my life—ever since we came upon you lying ill in that wretched Spanish inn. I was twelve and you were eighteen. Now I am twenty-one, and you are twenty-seven. We have been Harold and Francesca ever since—always friends, are we not?"

"Always friends, Francesca—friends and comrades; companions, brothers-in-arms, if you like; only, Francesca, if you please, not brother and sister. Let us not introduce that conventional nonsense."

"Not brother and sister," she repeated, gravely. "I know that very well."

"If we begin with reminiscences, let me remind you what you were at twelve: so full of your work, so inquiring, so curious of the world; so soft and dexterous with everything you took up;

so busy all day long; so thirsty for knowledge—that you carried me away captive. I was your servant from this very beginning, Francesca—as I am now. That has been a great happiness to me."

"You were the first English gentleman to whom I had ever spoken. French gentlemen, Italian gentlemen, American gentlemen, I had known. My mother knew many of them, but never an English gentleman. Many of them stayed at our hotel now and then. They wore tweed things and knickerbockers; their manners were not nearly so fine as those of the French or the Americans; they were coarse and loud, and talked of fox-hunting and shooting. If I had been asked in those days to define an English gentleman, I should have said he is the man who hunts. And then when you got well from your fever you came to us—a bright and clever young man, so sympathetic, so kind to a silly little school-girl. I was looking at my diary the other day. It is full of you: Harold went with us here—what Harold said. Harold went with us there—what Harold said. Harold went riding with me—what Harold said during the ride, and so on. It has, indeed, been a great happiness to me, this friendship with you."

She paused and considered.

"It is because I want to continue in this happiness," she said, "that I have said all this. It is to remind you of what you know very well already."

Again a pause.

"When you went away it was horribly dull. The talk of the fox-hunters was more stupid than ever. I wished that I knew no English. But a letter came from you—the first letter that I ever received. I have the letter still, with every one that you have written to me since; I would not part with one, because you are my friend—my first friend. There is all your life, your scientific work, your University distinctions, your ambitions—everything."

"I have all your letters, too, Francesca," the young man replied, jealously.

"Then, Harold, since we truly regard one another with so much trust and affection, tell me this: If I were to perceive that you were setting your heart upon anything impossible, wishing for what cannot ever happen, setting up an image of clay and calling it pure gold, don't you think it would be my simple duty, for dear friendship's sake, to tell you that such a thing is impossible?"

She faced him frankly and directly. Her words and her manner were clear and cold and unmistakable. He watched her curiously, thinking more of what Melkah had said than of what Francesca was saying. "You wait, I say. She loves you. Some day she will say Yes—yes—yes. When she says No, you may laugh. But take care. Do not say things that will anger her."

Then he slowly made reply: "I have heard something of this kind already, from your mother. If such a thing is, as you think, clearly impossible, it might certainly be wisest—yes, certainly—to be told in time."

"Then, Harold, plainly—it is quite impossible."

"May I ask—if it is not a question involving purely personal considerations—the fitness of the individual, for instance—why should it be impossible?"

"There are two reasons. The first is"—she joined her hands and looked up bravely—"that I must follow the example of my mother, and refuse the obedience you would demand. I should not—"

He interrupted her unexpectedly, so that the most beautiful sentence in the world was quite spoiled.

"Stop, please! How do you know that I should ask that obedience?"

How did she know? A moment before she knew nothing. How did she know? Because, in an instant, as by a flash of light in the darkness of her heart, she understood what might happen. She saw herself in willing submission to this man. It was as if from the outside she was looking at another Francesca, yet the same. This other Francesca, with soft and humid eyes, held out both her hands and resigned her heart, her will, her mastery to her lover. I declare that she saw quite clearly this other Francesca, and she understood for the first time in her life what love might mean. For the first time. Thus doth love awaken love. She hesitated. How did she know? She dropped her eyes.

"How do you know, Francesca," Harold repeated, "that I should claim this obedience?"

"I do not know," she stammered; "but all men expect obedience. Whatever they say or profess, they expect obedience. Oh, I know! And if, on the contrary, they have to obey, they think their manhood is destroyed. The husband who obeys the wife is scorned."

"If it is a Law of Nature—"

"But it is not." She recovered a little, and remembered her mother's teaching. "It is only a social convention, though by long sufferance grown almost as strong as a Law of Nature. And the Laws of Nature are not so cruel. Oh, Harold! I have all my life heard and read about the subjection of women. There are only two reasons why they should be subject—their poverty and love. I will never be subject—first, because I am not poor, and next, because I will never listen to love."

"What if I offered you equal friendship—on your own terms?"

She shook her head. "I could not trust you. Oh! You would loyally try to keep your promise. But you hardly understand what such a friendship would mean. You have never thought of a household where the wife was really the equal of the husband. Such a thing does not exist. It cannot as yet exist. We must educate the world in order to make it possible. We should have to create such a household, and it would be against all your prejudices; you would not like it. I confess, Harold, that a perfectly equal friendship cannot under present social conditions exist with love and marriage. And I prefer the friend to the lover."

"I offer you as close an equality as you can contrive for a working arrangement." It was not a very ardent way of expressing a lover's vows, but Harold knew what he was about. This was not a girl to be approached in the manner customary with a wooer.

"Thank you, Harold. But it is impossible. Let me keep the friend and send away the lover. Then we shall go on as happily as ever."

"If a thing is impossible, Francesca, it is foolish to ask for it. This thing is impossible, you say, because marriage and equality cannot exist together. I would only point out that if this is a law of universal application your Cause is doomed from the outset. However, you said, I think, that there are other points which make the thing impossible."

"The second point is that you want an old-fashioned marriage with an old-fashioned wife—a professional wife; a woman who makes her married life her profession—her vocation—and think of nothing but her house, her husband, and her family."

"I recognize the echo of certain vague ideas—perhaps the influence of the Norwegian Sage."

"Surely you should sympathize with me here, Harold. How could I do justice to myself if I were always thinking about others—about you, for instance?"

He nodded gravely. The question was frank.

"I have tried to look at the thing from the outside. I can quite understand that I might be tempted to be false to myself out of devotion to love. I do not feel any devotion, it is true, as yet. But one does not know what might happen. And, oh! the duty of making the most of this short life!"

"I understand. These ideas are in the air. Girls catch them as they catch the bacillus of some new disease. Well—I am not going to try to persuade you, Francesca. I had hopes—I have hopes still—that your kindly friendship might develop into love. I see that it has not yet done so. Very good. We will wait. But about this development. I think you are already fully developed. Whatever you do, nothing can make you more lovely or more lovable or more possibly useful to your generation."

"No compliments, Harold."

"These are not compliments. You say, however, that you want to develop still further. That means, I take it, that you want to learn quantities of things out of books."

"Perhaps."

"Men learn things out of books with the object of following a profession. Consider their development. In a thousand—or two or three thousand—of those who adopt a liberal and a learned profession you will find one, perhaps, who advances his subject. One—no more. The rest are contented to live as pleasantly as they can by their profession. Do you understand? The solicitor learns no more law when he has passed, the school-master learns no more Greek, the drawing-master does not try any longer to be a great artist. Would it help you to be like the two thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine?"

"No; I should make myself the one."

"You would fail, Francesca. I know you through and through. You are receptive; you are quick to understand; you would never—never—never advance any subject whatever. You would only learn what others have discovered. Is it development to stuff your brain with facts, and more facts, and still more facts?"

"You are frank, Harold."

"It is a time for frankness. Let us be quite frank for once.

Leave the developing process, I say, to other girls—inferior girls—girls that we don't care much about. Leave them to become tenth-rate scholars, artists, anything. If their brains are wasted and their gifts dissipated, it does not matter much, perhaps, compared with the waste of a noble creature like yourself."

"But it is the waste, noble or not, that I want to prevent."

"Their labors end in nothing. They imitate and follow. They advance nothing. Their end is oblivion."

"Oblivion awaits us all in the long-run. Yet it is something only to work. Every one who works advances science somehow. But, Harold, my friend, if you have given up wishing the impossible, shall we finish the talk for the present?"

"In one moment. Let me say my say. There is another side to the question—my side. Your virtues, your great gifts, to speak in the old-fashioned way, are not given you to be thrown away. You have inherited them—they are like an estate entailed; your duty is to pass them on if you can. You are a part of a great chain; the past generations have made you what you are—the flower of maidens. Francesca, from great mothers are born great sons. Will you be the last link in your chain? Will you have a black line drawn under your name? Will you throw away forever—yourself? Should the possible mother of a noble line deliberately refuse them for the service of the world?"

"This kind of argument does not touch me in the least," she replied, coldly and unmoved. "At Newnham something of the same sort used to be said. Duty to posterity, and so forth. That may appeal to some, but it does not move me. I will be free, therefore I must not enter into the bonds of love. We say 'bonds'—why, the word means slavery. That is all. I must live out my life in freedom."

"My poor Francesca, you do not know what you mean. Freedom? Your freedom would end in an abject slavery to self? And as for love, you know not what it means."

"Perhaps. The last word is—I must be free?"

"Very well; I say no more. In fact, I have said all that I have to say. My idea of love is quite the reverse of yours. I see in it only man's subjection. I can conceive of no greater happiness than to make you happy. I should like to work for you if you were not so horribly rich. It is the curse of riches that a man cannot work for a rich wife. Well, don't think that

I have given you up, Francesca. A time may come when the impossibilities will become shadows—ghosts of shadows—spectres of the twilight—flying before the rising sun. I will wait. You will tell me—then—won't you? Promise, Francesca. You will tell me of your own accord, for fear that I, who am so stupid, may not perceive the change—you will tell me—even if it means some other man?"

"Harold!" she interrupted, eagerly. "As if there *could* be another man! What you dream is impossible. But I promise."

He laughed. Cheerfulness is not always the outward and visible note of a rejected lover. But Harold laughed. There had not been the least sign in the girl's manner or words that she as yet understood the first elements of the universal passion. This was why her lover laughed.

"Meantime," he said, "companion, comrade, sister-in-arms—which isn't brother and sister—I haven't the least fraternal-sororal feeling towards you, Francesca; we will go on with each other just as we always have gone on, shall we? Quite as we always have done—no holding back, no reserves, no fear of being misunderstood. It is for you to tell me when the obstacles are removed. Is that agreed?"

He held out his hand. She met him, with frank eyes, without the least hesitation. She gave him her own hand.

"We will continue quite in the old style," she said. "Oh! I am so glad that you are reasonable!"

"Then, Francesca"—he still held her hand—"my dear old friend, there is nothing more to be said. I wait. You are still in the seraglio. When you come out—" He pressed her hand gently and left her. Of course he regretted, the moment he was in the street, that he had not kissed her hand.

Francesca stood looking after him. She had explained herself; he had acquiesced; he was perfectly reasonable. Yet she felt disappointed. Why? And again she saw that other Francesca, who held out her hands, and again she felt that strange yearning to give up everything, all she valued most—her freedom, her will—to this man, to be his. She went back to her own room thoughtful and sorrowful.

On the way she passed Melkah, still sitting huddled on the stairs.

"Child," said the old woman, "what have you told the young man?"

"I have sent him away, Melkah."

"You have sent him away? It is not well to send away such a young man. You are a foolish child and an ignorant child. My dear, you are born to be loved; you cannot fight against the Law. Beat the water, and it remains water still. A woman without a husband is a helpless creature. What is the saying of my People? 'She who hath her husband with her can turn the moon with her finger.'"

"I have sent him away, Melkah," Francesca replied, and mounted the stairs and sought her own room, where she pondered doubtfully over this miraculous appearance of the other Francesca.

CHAPTER V

MR. ALDEBERT ANGELO

"Sit down, Clara," said her father. "Sit down and talk to me about these grand friends of yours."

The place was the dining-room of a house in the Cromwell Road, not far from Madame Elveda's, but not so grand and fine as hers. The room was solidly furnished. Pictures—which the few who understand pictures would recognize as originals of great value—hung round the walls; there were "things" on the overmantel which the few who understand "things" would recognize as really good; the "things" were of glass, china, and ivory. People who came often to the house might have remarked that the pictures and "things" scattered lavishly about the rooms were subject to change more frequently than belongs to the common sublunary lot. With most of us our pictures, like our books and our dining-table, remain unchanged until the arrival of the Day of Dispersion. And that day we do never, it is to be hoped, behold. The explanation in this case — a thing perfectly well understood by everybody who did come to the house—was that the pictures and the "things" were all brought from a certain little place of business not far from Regent Street, where Mr. Angelo conducted a museum or treasure-house of Art, containing pictures, carved work, ancient glass, pottery, weapons, china, and bric-à-brac of every description. Anybody might go in and inspect the contents of this wonderful museum. Admission was invited, but visitors were understood to be collectors themselves and anxious to add to their collections. In plain words, Mr. Aldebert Angelo was a dealer in Art and bric-à-brac. That he had a house in Cromwell Road shows that he was a successful dealer.

It was evening. Mr. Angelo had been sitting since dinner reading the paper. Now he laid this aside, took a cigar—a corpulent cigar, full flavored, and began leisurely to prepare for a

luxurious hour. Not a person, from his outward appearance, of the highest refinement. Like the house, the man suggested business, and that successful; this you would guess at first sight, and without knowing anything of the little "place."

His daughter took a low chair on the opposite side of the empty fireplace and prepared to obey.

"Well, father," she said, "it is not often you are interested in friends of mine."

The girl, who had played two parts in the play—that of the singing girl and that of Esther—was very far from the Oriental beauty whom one pictures as the Royal Favorite. Orientals are believed to be languid. Clara was a maiden full of life and animation; she was intended by nature to be petite, but the exigencies of fashion caused her to go on growing until she became almost tall; her hair was fair and her eyes were blue, not the deep blue of Francesca's eyes, but a lighter and less distinguished kind; her face—only she did not herself know this, nor did her father—showed the administrative capacity. When we know that a girl possesses this invaluable gift we recognize the outward signs, and we say that her face shows it. The outward signs in her case were a straight nose, making rather a smaller angle with the forehead than is common—in other words, an advanced nose—delicate nostrils, a mouth turned exactly to the right curve, corresponding with its length, and a firm round chin. A dimple in her cheek and a smile always resident in her face also served to set off the more solid qualities of her appearance.

"What am I to tell you?" she repeated.

"Anything you like, my dear. It pleases me just to sit and hear you talk about these Elveda people now. Perhaps it is because they are so rich and fine that I like to think of my daughter being there; perhaps I've known something of the Elvedas in the course of my business. There are Elvedas in Paris; maybe they are relations. Besides, they are your friends. You're a woman now, Clara, and you are making friends for yourself—a good deal better friends than I could make for you. Here's a beautiful house—I've made that for you, but you must make the friends to fill it. As for furniture, yours can't be beat anywhere—it can't. As if I didn't know furniture when I see it. But our last attempt, Clara, eh?—to get our friends around us?"

Here Clara shuddered and laughed.

"They were not quite up to the furniture, were they? I acknowledge it. Now, my dear, fire away. You've had a play—you've told me that, and a most pernicious play it was, which the Lord Chamberlain would not have licensed on any consideration—teaching that a woman is not to obey her husband. I wonder the men didn't all get up and leave the room. They would, too, in society not half as good."

"I played the obedient wife, you know."

"You did, else I wouldn't have allowed it, even to please these friends of yours. Well, the play is over."

He spread himself in his chair, put up his feet on a stool, and nodded his head.

"Go on," he said, lazily. "It makes a man feel that he is really getting on when he cannot only live in a fine house like this and have his carriage and his man-servant, but can have his daughter going into such truly beautiful society. Countesses were there, I think you said. Go on, my dear. Before long you shall have these rooms, too, filled with your friends—Countesses and all. See if you don't. You're rich enough. You've only got to begin."

"I don't quite expect that—there are still prejudices, whatever we may say. Some people turn up their noses at trade, and some people don't like Us." She used the word with a capital. "Not many of the Newnham girls have asked me to their houses—have they?"

"Never you mind, Clara. You are as clever as any of them, and as beautiful and well-mannered. And your father could buy up all the lump. Patience, my dear. They may try to keep up the old prejudices, but they can't last. Why? Because we are now in the front of everything. They are afraid of Us because we are cutting them out in every line, big and little. They can't afford to hate Us any longer. You are an artist, too. Art, they say, breaks down all the barriers. What? Your father is in trade. And a good thing for him and for you. But you are an artist. Therefore, you are as good as any artist fellow whose father is an Earl. Only, I must say—I do wish your drawing was firmer, Clara."

"I cannot become a Titian, father—or a Vandyke—or even a Greuze. I shall never be anything but a tenth-rate painter."

"Well, my dear, something approaching an Angelica Kaufmann

would satisfy me. But go on. You can paint a bit—you have got an eye for color—you can talk the language, and you can pretend to belong to the Craft, though I shall never sell any of your pictures. Go on now about your friend, Miss Francesca Elveda. Francesca Elveda—Spanish Moor, you say?—Spanish Moor—Spanish Moor, I think you said?"

"She has a Jewish look—not so pronounced as her mother, but still unmistakably Jewish. But I have seen Arabs in Algeria with something the same look. She is a Semite, however, like ourselves. What am I to tell you about her? If I begin to talk about Francesca I shall run on forever."

"Everything. She interests me. So does her mother. So does everybody about her. Strange, isn't it? Perhaps it is the pleasure of hearing you talk, Clara. After the day's business I like you to talk to me. It's like soft music. When you marry I shall buy a musical-box instead. Now, then, let us begin all over again. The mother—what is she like?"

"She is like a Duchess. You would say she was a Castilian Grandee, she is so stately and so proud."

"So stately and so proud. Ha! Stately and proud," he repeated. "She would be now, perhaps, forty or fifty? About my own age?"

"Nearer forty than fifty, I should say. She dresses like a Queen. You know she is kind of a Queen in her own way. All the advocates of Women's Enfranchisement look up to her as a leader. She has written a big book on the Condition of Women in all times and over the whole world."

"She is a clever woman and a proud woman. Good and rich—of course she must be very rich. Her rent is over seven hundred, as I know. How was her money made? Because, you see, my dear, money has got to be made—it don't come of its own accord. It's got to be made somehow. Mostly, it's got to be fought for."

"I don't know. Most of Us make our money in trade. I do not know how Madame Elveda's money was made. I have always had a kind of idea that it grew specially in a garden for her."

"She wouldn't have anything to do with money made in trade, would she? Queens and stately Duchesses don't condescend to pick up money made in trade. Not anything so low as that.

Else she could not be so stately and so proud. Does she talk to you much?"

"Not much. She is gracious, you know, to all her visitors. But I am one of Francesca's friends, not hers. Her friends all belong to the Emancipation set."

"One of the daughter's friends. Now tell me about the daughter. You like her?"

"I like her," Clara replied, with real enthusiasm, "more than any girl I ever knew. There is no one in the world like her; no one so free and so frank, and so true and so loyal."

"Good," said her father. "Friends should be pals. Young people should begin by trusting each other. A few dealings together, later on, and what becomes of your trust?"

"She is a singularly reserved girl to all but her intimate friends. With them she has no reserve and no concealment. I think, you know, that she likes to feel a little superiority. Perhaps she only allowed herself to like me after she found out that she was intellectually above me."

Her father nodded his head over his cigar.

"The girl is as proud as her mother. Good. Is she proud of her money?"

"Oh no! Not that. She is most modest about her money. But she is proud by nature. She would be just as proud if she hadn't a penny."

"No—no," said the man of business. "Without money there is no pride. Don't talk nonsense, Clara."

"It would be nonsense concerning other girls. Francesca is just proud of herself, apart from her beauty and her wealth and her cleverness. She was talking to me once about a girl who let a man kiss her—but you would not understand."

"No, my dear, I don't think I should. Don't she like being kissed?"

"Like? I should be sorry for the man who should attempt such an outrage. Why, Francesca will not even hear of Love, because it turns a free woman into a servant."

"This house is nothing but a hot-bed of foolishness," Mr. Angelo interposed, roughly. "Let the silly girl never marry, then; let her die childless; serve her right for such folly. What? Who is she that she should kick against the Law? But go on, Clara; go on talking."

"Remember, father, that she is totally ignorant of any Law. She has been brought up without religion. She is neither Christian, Mohammedan, nor Jew."

"A Spanish Moor—eh? A Spanish Moor. What religion has a Spanish Moor?"

"She is proud of her descent. It pleases her to say that Ishmael was her Ancestor, and therefore Abraham—who is our Ancestor. They were Moors, you know, who openly conformed to the Catholic Faith, and yet for centuries remained Moslems in secret—just like certain Jews of Spain and Portugal."

"A few Jewish families, I believe, so conformed but remained Jews. We did not; we were expelled. I know nothing about the Moors."

"Oh! it is a most wonderful story. The Spaniards, you know, conquered the country four hundred year ago, when they took Granada and drove out King Boabdil the Unlucky. They killed all the Elveda family except one boy, who was spared—there was also an old woman. They made the boy a Catholic, but the old woman made him a Moslem, and so they have remained Moslems in faith ever since."

"And the girl—is she a Moslem, then? Does she go to Mosque on Friday?"

"We seldom talk about religion. Best not to talk about such subjects even with your best friends. I have never discovered, however, that she has got any religion, unless it is the worship of things beautiful."

"Stick to your own religion, my girl. And let other people stick to theirs. Well, as you say, a wonderful story. Quite justifies any amount of family pride, doesn't it? Well, we are getting on. Is the girl clever? Is she going to write books like her mother?"

"Clever! Oh! of course Francesca is clever. But it isn't that kind of cleverness. She did not go in for Honors, you know. She can write verses and make plays and stories. And she had a way of asking innocent questions which used to make people hot all over, especially the young Dons when they tried on their airs of superiority. She was pretty, too, and prettiness always helps, doesn't it? Somehow, one never thought that Francesca ought to take up any line; a leader ought not to specialize; she was born to be a Leader—we all thought so; she

thought so herself, I believe. But clever—oh! yes. She was certainly clever. Sometimes she could say sharp things, especially to the men who thought they would try to marry her. They seldom got very far."

"A girl who snubs her lovers—does that make her popular in society?"

"Well, in a way. The girls admire her independence, and the men admire her pride. Every young man, I suppose, thinks that his own must be the intellect to which she must bow down. On the other hand, she never defers to the men, and perhaps they don't like that."

"Go on. I like this kind of talk. There's nothing real about it—only the talk of young people who haven't got their money to make. Go on, my dear."

"Well, Francesca was not exactly popular, because she was reserved and made few intimate friends; but her friends loved her. There is something mysterious about her — something Oriental—something concealed—something to be discovered. It is as if she had worn a veil. Always she seems to be revealing something new. She corresponds with a young man who is her friend, on equal terms, but she will not marry him. She furnishes her room with rugs and hangings and divans, and puts carved cabinets about, till one really feels as if it was a room in a Harem. She has travelled everywhere; she knows half a dozen languages; she can sing queer songs to strange instruments, and she used to dress up in different costumes—she would be an Albanian, a Montenegrin, a Syrian, an Armenian—"

"And a Jewess?"

"No. Somehow, she does not like Us. That is, she likes the individual Me—not Us. We have had many talks about her prejudice."

Mr. Angelo snorted. "Unfortunate—yes. It is rather unfortunate, considering."

"Her mother, you know, wants her to become a leader in her own line. Perhaps she will. Perhaps not. The only ambition that she confesses is to have a salon of her own—a salon for literature and art. There are no more salons in London—I suppose because we are so big and so cut up in cliques and sets. But Francesca will make an attempt."

"Go on, Clara; I like it. When your money's made

you, what does it matter how you enjoy it—so long as you do enjoy it?"

"And then"—Clara was one of the numerous tribe who love nothing so much as to talk about their friends—"there is one curious thing about Francesca. She, who has travelled so much and seen so much, is sometimes as ignorant of the world as if she had been in a nunnery. Why people do things—what they want—you would think she had never talked with anybody, nor ever wanted anything. It is quite curious suddenly to discover how ignorant she is."

"Well"—her father sat up in his chair and threw away the stump of his cigar—"you've entertained me very pleasantly, my dear. I like to hear this kind of talk. Now, then, look here, Clara. There's a reason—don't ask me what—why you should cultivate this girl. Make as great a friend of her as you can."

Clara looked astonished. Then she turned very red. What did her father mean?

"I want no encouragement for that, provided"— She stopped short. One hardly likes to tell a father—particularly a father who is a stickler for the Law, and expects honor from his offspring—that you hope no business tricks are in contemplation.

"Provided," her father repeated, "that you don't get led astray by any nonsense about women and their equality. But you're too sensible, my dear, and you have been too religiously brought up—you know a woman's duties too well—to be led astray. One might as well be afraid that they'd convert you. Go there as much as you can, and talk to me about them as much as you please. Unless I am mistaken, things are going to happen before long in that house. Make the girl fond of you, Clara—mind that—make her lean upon you and turn to you for advice."

"Am I to make myself a spy in the house?" his daughter asked, her cheek flushing.

"Not a spy; I know all I want to about their actions. I want this girl to lean upon you and to take your advice. I have good reasons for desiring that. And look here, Clara, I'm a man of my word, which is one reason why I have got on. The chief reason why our people always do get on is because we are men of our word. Now, here is my word. I am bound, for certain reasons, to deal kindly towards Madame Elveda. Are you satisfied? Very well then. As for me, I shall very likely make the

acquaintance of Madame before long. You smile, Clara?" he asked, good-humoredly. "You think your father is not quite up to that lady's form? We shall see—we shall see. By-the-way, her husband—Emanuel Elveda was his name—what became of him?"

"You knew him?"

"No, I did not. He was a man of great scientific promise, I have heard. What became of him? Do you know?"

"He went abroad—to Morocco, I believe—on some scientific expedition, and died there."

"Oh! Killed by his brethren, the Moors, I suppose. Ishmaelites were always lawless from the time of their father."

He was silent again for a space. Then he went off in a ramble of speech disconnected, following his thoughts:

"Children never quite understand what it means when they hear that their fathers have had to make their own way. If you knew, Clara, the kind of society that I used to enjoy when I was your age; if you only knew—but there! you know Middlesex Street; you can guess—what the beginnings were, you would understand the happiness it is for me to see you received and holding your own, at your ease, in this other kind of society. Money and success, money and success! I always knew that money and success throw open all the doors—all the doors—even the doors," he laughed softly, "of Spanish Moors—of Spanish Moors—of Spanish Moors." He kept on repeating the words as if they amused him. "Of Spanish Moors. They open the doors of Spanish Moors."

CHAPTER VI

THEY COME LIKE SHADOWS, SO DEPART

"THE meeting down-stairs must be nearly over," said Francesca. "I wish I liked meetings. They bore me to death. I wish I could speak at the meetings—I wish, in fact, that I was otherwise."

It was about three weeks since the acting of the play and the declaration of the Thing Impossible. Francesca was sitting in her own room—that room in a Harem of which Clara has spoken—with Clara herself. Every Queen, Leader, Priestess of the present or the future must have her confidant. It needed no encouragement, however, for Clara Angelo to cultivate this confidence. At home, you have seen, she breathed the atmosphere of money-getting; here she breathed the purer air of those loftier levels on which the children stand when the money has been made, the independence achieved, and all the ladders kicked away. It is the Paradise of the money-makers' children, to whom it reveals the next generation. From the drawing-room below, from the hall, from the stairs there came the sound of many voices and many feet, with the rustling of many dresses, with the occasional shrill notes of a single voice speaking with fire and energy. It was the sound of a meeting, one of many meetings held every season in Madame Elveda's drawing-room in promotion of some branch of the great Cause.

"Clara, my dear," Francesca asked, "how shall I become otherwise?"

The two girls sat in this nest of a room, all silk and velvet and embroideries, by themselves. They had taken a pleasant afternoon tea, with cake and strawberries—an æsthetic, artistic, highly cultivated afternoon tea.

"Nobody in the world wishes you otherwise, Francesca."

"Alas! my dear, there is my mother. For she waits; she waits and hopes, and I draw no nearer to her hopes."

[See page 126

"'YES,' SHE MURMURED, 'THE MAN WAS RIGHT. JEWESS!—JEWESS!—JEWESS!'"

"Yet only the other day you wrote and acted your play of 'The Rebel Queen?'"

"Yes," Francesca replied, slowly; "I did, and I put into it the things that please my mother. And while I acted the part it seemed all right. I was Vashti, the Rebel Queen; and ever since I have had an uneasy feeling that Esther had the best of it—the modern Esther particularly, because she is not dismissed after a year or two."

"This is sheer heresy, Francesca."

"I suppose it is. Writing a play with my mother's sentiments in it, and refusing to marry a man in order to carry out my mother's views, ought to make it easier for me to begin that active part which she expects. Somehow it doesn't. She holds her meetings; she calls her committees; she reads her papers; she joins her Societies; she fills the house with eager women, all wanting—wanting—oh! what is it they all want so much?"

"Shadows, Francesca." Clara pretended to look around for listeners, and whispered low, "Shadows."

"Shadows? If I was sure that they were shadows I would join in the pursuit. They tell me that the things are real; that is what makes me afraid of them. I am used to shadows. I have had very little else all my life."

"Now you are going off into your fancies."

Francesca threw herself back in her low easy-chair, and rested her head upon her hands. For a pretty girl it is a pretty attitude. And she began to talk, almost to whisper, in a stream of low and murmurous words.

"Everything is a show and a shadow; the world is only a play of phantoms. Why should we vex our souls about fleeting shadows and airy spectres? Let the Show pass. Every one of us stands all by herself in the centre of infinity. It would be blackness inconceivable—solitude maddening—except for the Show which goes on all the time. When the Show ceases the soul will be left alone in the dark. That is death. I suppose the soul goes quite mad then, and for ever and ever knows nothing and feels nothing, being mercifully mad. But perhaps another Show begins—with light and music. Perhaps there is an endless procession of Shows, just to distract the poor lonely soul."

"Fancies—fancies!"

"When fancies fill your mind they are as real as if they were

not fancies. When you have no connection at all with the Passing Show, can it be anything but a Show of Shadows? What connection have I with the Passing Show? We stand together —my mother and I—apart from the world—and watch it. She gets angry about it, and would alter things in it. She tries to make me angry—I used to get angry—just a little, you know, not much—out of sympathy with her. I get angry no longer—I look on, and I am sometimes interested. But to get angry because one shadow weeps and another rages? To try to alter anything? No."

"What connection with the world would you have?"

"Why, what you have. Every other girl in the world has a country—a language—cousins—brothers—sisters. Every other girl has a part to play, her part with other girls and with men, in the Passing Show. She is a part of it; she plays, as actress, to herself as audience. She plays her part with her brothers, sisters, cousins. She falls in love, and plays a part with her lover. When she is not playing, she sits out and talks with others, and watches the playing of her friends; she feels no loneliness; it is only when the Show ceases for her that the loneliness begins. You, for instance, have everything; all the machinery of relationship that joins lives together."

"Oh yes! I have everything—cousins and all, I suppose."

"Some of them, perhaps, not quite rich?"

"Some of my cousins are quite poor."

"Oh, how delightful! So that you are even able to understand what people mean by talking about poverty. Now, if I try to understand poverty, the thing evades me. I cannot understand how people can consent to live at all unless they have enough of everything. Then, you had playfellows. I had none. I have always been quite alone. I never went to school; I sat alone in a private room of a hotel, and masters came to teach me. We belonged to no country; we had no language. I used to think in French, Italian, Spanish, wherever we happened to be. And I had no relations, not even cousins—nobody but my mother. Out of hotel windows and carriage windows I saw the Show of the world pass by. It was always a Show to me when I was a child —it is a Show still."

"You are dreaming, Francesca."

"Formerly, I used to guess at the stories—the Show is full of

stories. Now, I don't care for the stories; I neither laugh nor weep over them, I only see what excellent materials the Show affords for Art of all kinds. You can make pictures, plays, poems, stories out of it—wonderful things in Art—out of this Show. But it isn't real any the more for the pictures. A rainbow is an artistic thing, but it isn't real. So a starving group of needlewomen may make an excellent picture or a most moving poem; I could try to paint the picture, but the misery of the thing would not be real to me."

"Would you give them money?"

"I don't know. Perhaps. If they asked. Why not? I should not feel the loss. You see, Clara, we have always been so rich. We have had nothing to do with making the money; there are no responsibilities; no estates, lands, or tenants. To be rich as we are is exactly like a story in the *Arabian Nights* where the Jinn gives the man a charm. Aladdin had his lamp; he rubbed the lamp when he wanted anything. I have a magical possession just as good as Aladdin's lamp. My Jinn gave me an electric-bell; I touch it, and everything that I want comes up. It is pure magic. Where does it come from? I don't know. I have never asked. There is nothing in the world that I cannot get by pressing the magic bell. How much reality do you think was left to Aladdin after he had practised with his lamp for twenty years? Why, when I was a child I used to think it was ridiculous of anybody to want anything when he only had to touch the bell. So foolish not to know so simple a thing! Even now, when I ring the bell I have the same feeling that Aladdin had with his lamp."

"But you do know very well that things are real."

"No, I do not know very well. I only suppose. I am told that things are real, but I do not feel their reality or understand it. Therefore they are not real to me. Things, as you call them, produce on me only the effect of a Passing Show. I look out upon a Panorama, a Drama that never ends—an interesting Drama, the meaning and plot and proposed ending of which I do not understand."

"What is real, then? Nothing?"

"I myself—I—I—I. And persons and things, so far only as they touch me—you and my mother and my pictures and my music and my books; but the only thing quite real is myself—I

—myself—not the bag of bones and skin with a head and feet, but myself, with all my clothing—such as it is—poor rags and duds—of knowledge and of Art. It matters nothing to me that another person feels her own reality. She isn't real to me. She isn't a part of myself."

"But there are so many people part of one's self."

"To you—yes—a great many. To me—none."

"Your mother."

"She is always watching over me, directing, superintending. But I don't really know her. She is a kind of Providence for me."

"Well, then, you must consent to marry; you must find some one who will connect you at once and forever with the world."

"Not that way, Clara; I would rather be lonely than become a slave."

"Well—but how can you be the only real thing when without the existence of this world of work your collection of acquirements—you yourself—would vanish?"

"I don't know. The world of work is the machinery of the world. It is the Service. It answers the bell, my dear, and brings up the things. We do not ask how the hotel is managed. That is the Service. Down below they are confecting a dinner for us—scouring pots, I dare say—peeling potatoes—making salad. Is that part of myself?"

"Everything is, I suppose, a part of one's self. We are all human."

Francesca shook her head doubtfully.

"Nothing that is human should be outside us. So they say. Clara, let me confess all my hard-heartedness. I am never moved with reading of human miseries at all. They are only part of the Passing Show. You know the beggars who sit about the steps of the Italian churches—the picturesque, dirty, ragged, lazy creatures; the more dirty and ragged the more picturesque they are. To me they are there to make a picture. If they are poor and miserable it is their fault, I suppose. The tale of the greatest injustice does not make me angry. It is a matter for police and magistrates; it shows defective machinery; part of the Service is gone wrong. I should like to ring the bell and call the attention of the Manager to it. That is all."

"Those two girls you told me of under the lamplight three years ago, Francesca?"

"There was some defect in the management, my dear. I ought to have rung the bell."

"Well, but, Francesca, with these fancies how are you going to carry on your mother's work?"

"That is the question I am always asking, Clara. How am I going to do anything of the kind? She has set forth the condition of women. She demands their equality."

"Man is master and will remain master," said Clara, the Jewess. "It is the Divine Law."

"Then their equality by human law. That accomplished, all the rest is to follow. Well, I can feel strongly enough in my own case—I would never—never—never submit to a master—but—sometimes—when one thinks of the Passing Show, and how the women play their parts with contentment, and the continuance of custom, and the strength of prejudice, and the impudence of one woman standing up for all the millions of women, the thing becomes impossible—I feel that I cannot even attempt it. At other times, when the fancy of the Passing Show vanishes, I can see the splendid audacity of an attempt to move the whole world. I become in imagination a greater than Vashti, who only rebelled against her Lord the King, and I feel myself the greatest of all women that ever lived, because I rebel for all."

"You might be the bravest of all women, but you would be the most unsuccessful. However, it seems to me a far, far greater dream—that of the Leader even in a Cause doomed to fail—than to sit alone, by yourself, alone in the world, hardly amused by the Passing Show."

"Do you think so, Clara? Do you always think so? Sometimes I think so, too. Just at this moment my own world—all my own, my very little world of what I love—seems to me far better than the real world. It is because I am in doubt. Is it worth while to trouble about the real world? Real? What nonsense we talk about the real world! There are a thousand real worlds. Let us make one for ourselves and live in it, as in a tabernacle—you and I, Clara, and two or three more. We can make it a world of Culture and Art. If we want food, we will ring the bell and they will bring up on the lift a tray of peaches and grapes and Still Moselle. We will work at Art, which is much finer than Humanity; Art is the only Goddess who has

nothing to do with age; her followers have no past and no future—they live in present achievement."

"Oh, Francesca! What is the good of dreaming an idle dream? Who can escape from the world? It is always with us."

"It need not be."

"But your world of culture would be soon disturbed by certain unexpected realities. You cannot, for example, escape sickness and death."

"Sickness is only an incident. You get a toothache and it is disagreeable. It goes and it is forgotten. Bereavement? Yes; but then everybody hopes to escape it. Death? It is the end. It comes, and we either feel no more forever, or we wake to some new existence elsewhere."

"Oh! you are truly an Oriental through and through, Francesca. You would live in a Harem secluded and guarded."

"A Harem if you like—but without the King."

"You would soon grow tired of your Harem and your seclusion and your Art."

"Never—never—if you and two or three more will keep me company."

"Oh!"—Clara got up, laughing—"and a very pretty thing you would make of Art in your cloister! I think I see the conventional figures. My dear, if you want to practise Art, you must not sit here and paint. You must go outside and watch—and study and imitate—the men."

"Clara! In this house!" Francesca sat up and laughed merrily. "The roof will fall. The bell will not ring if you talk like that! The magic bell will cease to act. The Service will run away—I don't know what will happen if you repeat such things."

"You must do as the men do, my dear. You must go to the Life School. You must study anatomy and draw from the living figure as it is. You must come out of your Harem, or your Art will be contemptible stuff, indeed."

"The child," said Melkah. "Have you watched the child of late?"

"I watch her every day," Madame Elveda replied. "What do you mean, Melkah?"

"She is troubled—she does not sing. I do not hear her laugh—she sits in silence."

"Well, she is thinking. She is a woman now, Melkah. She is thinking about the great future before her, and how to begin it."

"She is full of fancies. She is sick with fancies. Give her a lover to change her thoughts. Marry her—marry her. Let her have a husband to obey."

"Melkah," said the mistress, "you should be back again in Damascus. My daughter shall own obedience to no man."

CHAPTER VII

THE ARM OF COINCIDENCE

MR. ANGELO'S little place in Mortimer Street is certainly more like a private house than a shop. The windows are those of a private house; there is no name over the door, only a small brass plate with the name "Angelo" in the middle of the side-post. But all the world knows Angelo's. The door stands open; the visitor enters, turns the handle of an inner door, and finds himself on the ground-floor, the back room opening out of the front. These rooms are furnished, rather too much furnished, with a curious assortment of chairs, tables, and cabinets. The walls are covered with pictures, except where a bracket supports a clock or a statuette or an ancient mug. The cabinets are filled with all manner of odds and ends, coins of every age and every land, watches of every maker, rings in trays, precious stones in trays, scarabæi and mummy figures and hieroglyphic inscriptions from Egypt, tablets covered with cuneiform characters from Assyrian mounds, statuettes in silver and bronze, ancient lamps, Roman pottery and tiles, mediæval glass, cameos—I know not what. The whole house is a museum; on the stairs are sarcophagi and things carved in wood, in the rooms above are china and porcelain, things precious and costly, ivory caskets, wooden chests, idols, arms, and implements from every country under the sun, dresses and fabrics of every kind; there is nothing which may not be seen, examined, and bought here; there is nothing which Mr. Aldebert Angelo, proprietor of this wonderful collection, does not keep and does not know. He is not a picture-dealer, he will tell you; yet here is a picture, a genuine Vandyke. How does he know that it is genuine? He laughs gently. Everybody knows, he says, such a simple thing as that. Here is a piece of Sèvres. How does he know that it is genuine? He laughs. Everybody, he says, can see at a glance that it is genuine. Here is a coin, a silver shekel, with the Maccabæan stamp. How does he know

that it is genuine? Well, he says, a forgery proclaims itself, whether it be paste pretending to be a diamond, or gilt pretending to be gold, or a copy pretending to be an original. How do people get this eye for the genuine and the forged? No one knows. It is born with a man, perhaps; inherited; especially it is a gift of the People to whom Mr. Aldebert Angelo belongs.

A clerk sits on this ground-floor; he is invisible when you go in; he remains invisible while you walk about and look at the things. When he perceives by a certain green hue that falls upon every visitor's face after a time that he is seized with a sickness of yearning, a longing for something, he suddenly appears, and proceeds to give, in a soft and confidential murmur, a little history of that thing. He is quite young, but he knows about as much as his employer, and he never—never—never suffers anybody to depart without leaving behind him a substantial portion of his worldly wealth in return for a bibelot, a bit of bric-à-brac, a coin, a pot, a picture, a statuette.

This morning two men were conversing in one of the front windows of this museum. They were both men of about fifty. One of the two you have already seen. He was standing, one foot on a carved stool, his left hand jingling keys in his pocket—a man somewhat shorter than the average, and certainly of more solid build. He was dressed in the style of the substantial British merchant. There are a good many like him, I believe, in the City, and we recognize the figure, and we know what it is meant for when it is drawn or when it is met. Broadcloth covers that figure—a good substantial broadcloth. The company of which he is chairman may be shoddy and sham; but his exterior is good broadcloth. This figure wore a faultless hat, had a solid gold chain across his waistcoat, a large signet-ring on his finger, and gold pince-nez with a thin gold chain upon his nose. His hair had gone off the temples and crown; what was left of it was black; he had thick black eyebrows; his eyes were keen and bright; his face, though the features were somewhat marred with too generous living, showed the greatest ability. Such a man might have been Chancellor of the Exchequer, or he might have organized a revolution, yet he was only a dealer in bric-à-brac; he might have led the House of Commons, but he was only Mr. Aldebert Angelo, of Mortimer Street, dealer in curios.

He was standing. The other man was seated on a carved

oaken chest. This man, about the same age, was of very different appearance. Generous living had not puffed his cheeks or swelled his neck; he was slight and thin; he clearly belonged to a lower social level; he wore a pot-hat, and was dressed in a gray suit which fitted more tightly than is the fashion with most men. His sharp face, the carriage of his small, well-set head and body, his keen eyes, showed a curious alertness as of one always on the watch—the face of the hunter and the hunted. The name of this person to the general public was Sydney Bernard. To those who know the Turf and have heard of book-makers—one need say no more. And though no two men could be more unlike each other, and though the two men bore different names, this man was the brother of Mr. Aldebert Angelo.

"The name attracted me first," Mr. Angelo was saying. His voice was soft, musical, and low—say persuasive—say rich, if you like—but there is a less pleasing adjective sometimes used in connection with such a voice, that you must not use. "The name, Elveda. Everybody knows the name. Why, it belongs to history—our history—as much as the name of Albu—who ever heard of an Elveda outside ourselves? My Clara first told me about these people. She made the acquaintance of the girl—Francesca Alveda—at Newnham, where she was at college, you know; Clara thinks everything about her. Never was a girl so clever; never was a girl so beautiful; never was a girl so rich; calls herself a Spanish Moor. That set me thinking. Why should a Jewess call herself a Spanish Moor? How came she to be so rich? You never heard of an Elveda with money, brother?"

"Never."

"They were Spanish Counts once, and pretended to be Catholics, but they had no money. There have been scholars among them and men of science and study, but never any rich men. Where did the money come from, then? And why Spanish Moors? Our People can call themselves what they like, brother, but—"

The brother nodded. "What they like," he repeated. "All the same—"

"I understand you, brother; that is so, fortunately for ourselves. It is by Special Providence, and for our ultimate glorification. I haven't seen the girl, but I understand from Clara that a Spanish Moor is not to be distinguished from a Spanish Jew.

Well, Clara is a friend of the girl and goes to the house. They live in Cromwell Road, not far from my house. They've got the biggest house in the Road; they've got horses and carriages; the place is always full of people; they give dinners and dances and private theatricals and concerts. Madame Elveda has meetings about women's rights and such stuff. I am told that the house is well furnished, and that it contains—as you'd expect from a house furnished by women—everything that it shouldn't—bad copies for pictures, antiques made yesterday, old armor hammered last week, and china most clumsily forged: you know the stuff that goes into a house where there are only women. Why, my Clara herself, with all her advantages, has never been quite able to tell a copy from an original. So long as they believe that it's all right they are happy. Wait till it comes to selling off."

"What are you coming to?" asked the other.

"Wait a bit. I said I was going to surprise you, and I am. Everything in this world is accidental. When I was in Paris the other day I saw in the shop of one of my correspondents a very curious little collection of books. Quite by accident—for I don't, as a rule, buy books—I asked what they were and where they came from. They were once the property, he told me, of a certain Charles Albu—"

"Charles Albu?" Mr. Bernard, who had been showing signs of boredom, became suddenly attentive. "Charles Albu? What relation was he to us?"

"Charles Albu!" Mr. Angelo repeated. "You have heard of the great contractor in the Peninsular War, Simeon Albu? You know that he was a cousin of ours?"

"I have heard that there was such a cousin. As for any use he was to us—"

"None—none! Our father was too proud to ask his help—foolishly proud, I call it—when a few hundreds would have lifted him once for all out of the Whitechapel hole where he has always been mouldering. But he wouldn't. Well, this Charles Albu was the only child of that great contractor."

"He must have been rich, then."

"He was rich. As my French correspondent told me, he was *riche à millions—richissime.* He was almost as rich as any man need wish to be. I made it my business to find out all I could about him, because in such a case nobody knows what may hap-

pen. When a great fortune is in a family it is like a title or a landed estate. All the cousins must keep up their connection with the family. Nobody knows how an estate may drop in. To look after such a fortune, brother, should be a duty which we owe to ourselves and to our children."

The other, who was a man of few words, nodded his head.

"Well, then; now listen. This Charles Albu lived in Paris all his life; he never entered into any speculations, nor did he gamble, nor did he sport, nor did he trade; he enjoyed his income. He spent money in collecting books; two or three booksellers weep still to think of him; but he never spent all his income, and he never tried to increase it in any way. A dull life, brother—dull, dull, and unprofitable."

The other man shook his head. "Dull," he repeated. "A waste of life, neither to make more nor to lose."

"He just lived as a wealthy man among the pleasures of Paris."

"Pleasures?" the man of the Turf repeated. "Pleasures?—without speculation — or sport — or gambling — they are all the same—" He looked to his brother to finish the sentence.

"Life has few other pleasures, indeed. This man, our cousin, thought differently, I suppose. He lived retired; he took such pleasure as he wanted, and he died young."

"No wonder!"

"Well, now I am going to give you my surprise. He had only one daughter; she is said to have been very beautiful—also a cousin of ours, mind. This girl was twenty when her father died; at twenty-one she inherited the whole of the great fortune. She was then about the biggest heiress in France, and she married. She might have married anybody she pleased, with all her money; she might have married a great English lord—French lords are not of much account. But she did not; she just married one of her own People. He was a young man who had made already some discoveries or other in science—what they call a promising young man. It is just as well that some of our ability should show itself in other than business lines. The name of this young man was Emanuel Elveda."

"Oh!" The other man looked up sharply. "Then these rich people are our cousins!"

"I thought I should surprise you, brother. Yes, this millionaire

and her daughter are our cousins. We had the same great-grandfather, and he lived in the Ghetto of some Italian town. But there's more to tell. They had not been married very long—a year, perhaps—when they quarrelled and parted, no one knows why. As for the husband, he went away, and nobody knows what became of him. He is dead, probably. The wife, who had a baby, remained abroad until three or four years ago. But she is separated from her own People—goes no more to synagogue—and declares herself to be a Spanish Moor, which her daughter is said to believe. A Spanish Moor! So, you see, our cousin is not likely to own us."

"Where is the money?"

"I do not know. My inquiries have brought me little further than the separation. When that happened, Isabel Elveda took the management of her fortune out of the hands of the former manager, who was one of Us, and placed it in Christian hands in order to mark her departure."

"Is she a Christian, then?" Mr. Bernard asked, quickly.

"Not that I know of. The inheritance was invested, when the daughter succeeded, in French Rentes of various kinds, and in English Consols—safely and prudently invested. That I know, because I have conversed with the former manager—an old man now. Where it is now I cannot tell."

"This great fortune, brother—" He stopped and waited. He had a way of letting his brother finish the sentence.

"I know what you are going to say—it belongs to the family. It is true that this woman has left her own People, but she would not, surely, give away such an immense fortune out of the family. She could not. And it is our duty to reflect that the management of this fortune is in the hands of a woman; and that she may be tempted to play with it. Fancy an ignorant woman playing with such a property! Think of the sharks and the robbers who would gather round her as soon as she began to play! Think of the rotten things she would be made to bolster up for their benefit! Why, it is terrible to think of what might happen."

Mr. Bernard nodded thoughtfully.

"Do you know how much it is? Forty millions of francs when this woman succeeded—more than a million and a half of English money. Sixty thousand pounds a year! Sixty thousand pounds a year! More than a hundred and fifty pounds a day! Six

pounds an hour! There's a fortune for you! Good Heavens! And all in the hands of one woman who has but one child—a girl. The girl may never marry—she seems to be a fool, for she says she shall never marry — or she may have no children, or she may die — then — brother — what becomes of all this money? Besides, I have heard from Paris. Her agent, a Frenchman and a Christian—it is whispered among Us—speculates—and has been losing."

"What can we do?"

"She has left her People. She should be dead to us. But then it isn't as if she were a man; and it isn't as if she had turned Christian, for she hasn't. She is only to be regarded as a Jewess who neglects her religion; and she is always, remember, our cousin. Perhaps she does not know that she has any cousins; certainly her father kept up no acquaintance with our side of the family. In that case we ought, perhaps, to inform her that she has a large family of cousins. Perhaps she is not desirous of cultivating her relations—that is her lookout. We shall certainly not force ourselves upon her—not that she has any call to be ashamed. What? A man may strip himself of everything—religion and race and friends and money—but he can't strip himself of his family; that remains. You belong to your family, you are tied to your family, you can't get away from it—anyway. The brothers and the cousins remain."

"They do."

"And they have the right to offer assistance and counsel. It may not be taken, but they can offer it."

"Then we might—"

"What you are going to say, brother, is exactly my opinion. We might call upon her. Let us think it over. I learn from Clara that Madame Elveda, our cousin, Isabel Albu that was, is a proud and very dignified woman. We must be very careful. It will not do to fling in her face publicly the fact that she pretends to be what she is not, and that she is what she pretends not to be. We must be very careful."

"Does Clara know?"

Mr. Angelo laughed softly. "Would a wise man intrust a secret to the keeping of a woman? No, no. Clara will be useful. Clara makes herself necessary to the girl; but Clara does not know why."

Just then the door was pushed open, and a man walked in, looking about him. He was a man of middle age—say of forty-five. He had the healthy brown skin—with stains of weather upon it—which belongs to men who have travelled or voyaged much, yet nothing of the sailor in his aspect. You could guess from the first glance at his face that he was a traveller. He was not dressed quite in the fashion of Piccadilly; you could not, from his appearance, assign him his position in the world. Now most men can be set down as this, that, or the other merely from their outward appearance. For instance, looking round in an omnibus one discovers that this man has a shop, or a "place of business;" and that the other man is in the City, and has an office; and that the third man is evidently a solicitor; and the fourth man is a professional in one of the fancy kinds, such as music; and the fifth man is connected with the Turf; and the sixth is an actor; and the seventh is a rustic; and the eighth is a clergyman—and so on. It was, however, more difficult to guess from his appearance the condition or calling of this man. He was dressed in a loose jacket of brown cloth, and had a soft felt hat; so far, he might have been an artist of some kind. But there was nothing of the artist on his face. His other garments showed signs of long wear; his boots were made for rough work. He might have been returning from a long journey; he was travel-stained; his hands were, and always had been, gloveless; they were browned by exposure, and the fingers were horny, as if they worked. These outward signs, taken together, do not belong to any of the known professions. Yet if the spectator or the speculator should by accident chance upon a recollection of the word "Pilgrim," that would at once suggest a solution of the difficulty. The man might be a Pilgrim; the felt hat, in imagination, enlarged its borders and became ornamented with scallop-shells; his gray jacket became a long gray gabardine, with a belt from which hung a shell and scrip; and his walking-stick became a Pilgrim's staff. Pilgrim, no doubt. Pilgrim to many a holy shrine.

A Pilgrim, truly. This man had wandered alone for twenty years, all the time on pilgrimage. He was, as you shall learn in good time, the greatest Pilgrim living—the most extensive Pilgrim of past or present.

This man was no other than Emanuel Elveda, the very man of whom the brothers had just before been talking. The arm of

coincidence brought him to this place at this moment. When last you saw him he refused, in his wife's drawing-room, the wages of compromise. He was young then. Twenty years make a great difference in every man's face; the change is not capricious, but by law—see my great work of the future on the subject of Development, Chapter XLIV., "On the Face and its Expression;" title of sub-section, "Influence of Occupation." It is a very interesting chapter, and full of learning. Here you will see set forth—but compare Chapter XCII., on "Daily Habit"—not only the general laws, but also the law of influence. Show me a faithful portrait of a man at twenty-five, and another of the same man at fifty, and I will read the history of his habitual thoughts, and tell you the kind of work he has been doing. Such knowledge should prove especially useful at a General Election, the choice of a President, or the recognition of a Leader.

This man's life had been that of a philosopher; therefore his face had softened—all the lines in it had softened. When last we saw that face there was the look of a warrior—a captain; now it was the face of a ruler—a sheikh. The man had ruled nobody except himself; that is enough, however, when the self is great. There had been the keen eye of a hawk on the face; now the eyes—the deep blue eyes—were softened. Full of light were they still, but it was the evening, not the morning, light. Often in twenty years the beauty and the strength of a face vanish; look round among the men of fifty, and restore, if you can, the face of one-and-twenty. Where is it—that face so bright and brave, so pure and lofty? Gone—gone! The smudges of thirty years have changed and spoiled it; it is spoiled by the allurements of life; it is stained with wine, puffed with feasting, dragged down by the tangles of Neæra's hair; the strong face has become weak; the face framed for wisdom has become foolish.

But this man's face was still strong; it was stronger than of old, yet no longer combative; his brown beard was flecked with gray; his hair, longer than most men wear it, was thin on the temples and also flecked with gray; crow's-feet lay round his eyes—which were serious eyes; a deep line had been drawn across his forehead; his mouth, so far as could be seen behind his beard, was grave and set; there was little laughter on those lips. And he wore glasses—glasses with good strong blue rims.

He removed his hat as he entered, and stood looking about him.

The clerk of the ground-floor seeing that this was no purchaser, but perhaps a vender, became visible, stepped down the shop, and asked him gently how he could serve this stranger.

"I have a letter," he said, "for Mr. Aldebert Angelo."

His English was very good, but it had a foreign accent. You know how a Frenchman, a German, and a Russian respectively speak English—this man spoke as a Russian does, quite clearly and distinctly, and with all the aspirates right, yet with a foreign accent.

Mr. Angelo turned round. "A letter for me? I am Mr. Aldebert Angelo. Hand it over, my friend."

The visitor produced a letter from a large leather pocket-book, shiny and black from long use. "It is," he said, "from your Hamburg correspondent, Solomon Rosenberg."

Mr. Angelo looked at him curiously and opened the letter.

"Oh, LORD!" he cried. Now, nobody had ever before witnessed such a phenomenon in Mr. Aldebert Angelo. He was accustomed to receive everything—changes of price, depreciation of value, or the opposite—with the calm of a philosopher. At this moment he gazed upon his visitor with every mark of uncontrolled amazement. His face seemed to become thin as well as pale—but this was a spectral illusion—he opened his mouth, he gasped.

"What is it?" asked his brother.

For reply, the astonished man handed over the letter, murmuring, "Read it and see!"

Mr. Bernard read the letter. His profession—if any can—teaches one to guard against sudden emotions. The most surprising things do not disturb the Turf man outwardly. He did not change color; he only lifted his eyes and glanced at the man who had brought the letter, and then gave it back to his brother, and waited for him to speak.

"You are Emanuel Elveda?" Mr. Angelo asked, recovering a little. "You are actually Emanuel Elveda?"

"I am Emanuel Elveda," the man replied, gently. He appeared quite unconscious of any cause for curiosity, and stood before them without the least embarrassment.

"Pray—my correspondent does not tell me this, there may be more than one person of your name—are you the Emanuel Elveda who married, about twenty years ago, in Paris, one Isabel,

daughter of the late Charles Albu, in the Synagogue, Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth?"

"I am that Emanuel Elveda."

"Oh! and I believe that you were separated from your wife about a year afterwards?"

"That is so."

"And you have never been heard of since?"

"There is no reason why I should be heard of. My wife had left me. I had neither wife nor child to ask after me. If the world—which has long forgotten me—should remember me again, and should choose to think me dead, what does that matter?"

"Neither wife nor child? Why, your wife is still living here in London."

"My wife has left me. That is enough."

"Why have you written no letters?" Mr. Angelo put this question, gazing upon him curiously.

"I have, besides, neither brother nor sister. And I have no money. Therefore I am a person of no interest to the world. Why should I write letters? To whom should I write letters?"

"How do we know that you are Emanuel Elveda?"

"What does it matter? I am Isaac Cohen, if you like, or Solomon Löwe. What does it matter? If you do not believe that I am Emanuel Elveda, believe that I am somebody else."

"Well, I suppose you are the man. The reason why I started when I read your letter was that we were actually talking about you at that very moment. A coincidence!"

"Yes, a coincidence," Emanuel answered, carelessly. Why should, or why should not, these people talk about him? He did not ask why they were talking about him or what they were saying. He was indifferent. The thing did not concern him.

"In all these years—twenty years, is it not?—of your absence, what, if we may ask, have you been doing?"

"I have been wandering—travelling—no—wandering about the world."

"And now you propose, I dare say, to return to your wife?"

"No; she may return to me, if she pleases. I shall not return to her. Pray, if you are a friend of my wife's—"

"I have never seen her."

"Then we need not speak of her. We will speak of the reason of this visit. Your friend Solomon Rosenberg, of Hamburg, told me that perhaps you could assist me in what I want."

"What is your business? Is it money?"

"There is no money in any business of mine."

"I remember to have heard that you were a man of science. I suppose there is no money in science?"

"I do not live by science, but by the work of my hands. I am a carver in wood."

"A carver in wood! You are a man of science, and you live by the work of your hands! And your wife is a millionaire—the richest woman of all our People—living in a Palace! And you live by carving wood! This is truly wonderful!"

"What is it to me whether my late wife is rich or poor? Will you do for me what I want? If so, I will work for you; if not, I will go."

"What do you ask me to do for you?"

"Find me a market for my carving. Herr Rosenberg says you buy such things. I work at it only enough to pay my way, and I ask but little for my work."

"If you really can carve. Plenty of men pretend to this, that, and the other, but a real carver of wood is as difficult to find as a good painter of pictures. It is an age of bad art, my friend, bad work, bad everything, bad workmen multiplied by the thousand. If you can really carve, look at this chest, now." He pointed to the small oak chest on which Mr. Sidney Bernard had been sitting; it was covered with wood-carving; there were pilasters on the sides and front; there were vines with leaves and clustering grapes—a very beautiful piece of old carving to all appearance. "Look at that, now. What do you think of this piece of work—a noble, noble piece of last century work? Can you equal that?"

The man stooped and examined it carefully. "This," he said, "is not last century work at all. It was executed yesterday. Nor is it noble work; it is common work. You called it last century work in order to try me. He who sells this chest for good work or for old work commits a fraud."

Mr. Angelo laughed. "He who buys it for good work or for old work, my friend, commits a folly. That is the better way to put it. Come, now, Mr. Elveda, can you do such work as that?"

"Mine is very much finer work. This is coarse in execution and common in design."

"Humph! I thought you were a scientific man. Well, if you really can do what you say— Come, Mr. Elveda, bring me a sample of your work. If it is only as fine as this which you call coarse and common, I'll take all you can do. And the more the better. And for terms—but you shall see."

"Thank you. I will begin at once."

"What is your address? Where are you lodging?"

"I do not know. I must find one somewhere. Do you know of any place where I could live? It must not be quite in the middle of the houses. They choke me."

Mr. Angelo stroked his chin thoughtfully. Then he looked at his brother and nodded his head, with the least little emphasis as of private meaning and intelligence.

"Perhaps I can. You want to work at home and to have meals at home, I suppose. Yes. Yours is clean work. I suppose you don't carry on scientific work—which means stinks and bottles in your room—only the carving. Yes. You don't want, naturally, to be very near your wife—you are not anxious to meet her—you are not anxious for her to meet you—of course not. Well, now, my friend here—Mr. Bernard is his name—happens to have a room in his house which would just suit you." Mr. Bernard started slightly, but made no other sign. "You can have it for five shillings a week, and you can make some arrangement about meals. His daughter teaches music, which won't interfere with your work. Make it lively, like a barrel-organ all day in the street. The place is at the other end of the town—a cheerful, airy locality, looking out over a—kind of garden. And you can get about by the Underground Railway—Portland Road Station."

"Thank you. I shall be very glad to accept the offer if this gentleman—"

"Oh yes!" said Mr. Bernard. "I suppose you can have the room. Shall you want it for long?"

"Not for long; I have some business to get through—the business that brought me here. Perhaps two or three months—then I shall go away again."

"There's another thing," Mr. Angelo continued. "If you don't want to be known, you had better take another name.

Many of our People do, you know. My name is not Angelo. If you don't want people to go about saying that Emanuel Elveda, who was thought to be dead, has come back to life, you had better call yourself something else. Just as you like, you know, but if you don't want to be talked about you had better work under another name. Emanuel Ellis, say—eh? Why not Ellis?"

"As you please. Let it be Ellis—or anything else—as you please."

"Where are your things?"

"I have a bag with a change of clothes and my tools."

"Very good! Then here is the address." Mr. Angelo wrote it down on a card. "Mr. Bernard is now going home, and will see that things are ready for you. Good-morning, my friend. Good-morning, Mr. Ellis."

Emanuel Elveda took the card, read the address, inclined his head gravely, and went away.

"Brother," said Mr. Angelo, when the door closed, "I promised you a surprise, but hang me if I was prepared for such a surprise as this! Well, now! That is Emanuel Elveda—our cousin by marriage. We may as well keep the little secret to ourselves, and keep the man under our own eyes—eh? Your lodger. No need for the world to know that Emanuel Elveda, thought to be dead, has come back to life again—eh? His wife don't want him back. Nobody wants him back. But where there is money it's well to be careful."

"Quite as well," his brother repeated. "As to the man, now—"

"I know what you are going to say. The man is clearly one of those unfortunates who never could make money with all the chances in the world. He married a millionaire, and he left her—think of that! He keeps himself with wood-carving—actually, with wood-carving! He's a chemist, and I don't know what. He ought to be discovering things, taking out patents—rolling in riches. Wood-carving! And his wife a millionaire! He won't give you any trouble, brother, and it really is just as well to know what he is doing. We may be instrumental in bringing all that money back through this very man. Wood-carving! Well, I shall get him cheap, I dare say. That will be something—if he can really carve. And I shall be useful to him. There's no gratitude in trade; but in science, who knows? And the Elveda's were always fools about money."

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE LABORATORY

THERE is no place in the world more full of mystery which is a form of delight than a well-ordered laboratory. A woman's heart is full of mystery; but even when one has it—surrendered at discretion and given up—in one's own custody it is so very, very hard to read. A cuneiform, a Hittite inscription is as legible. A factory with its steam-engine and complicated wheels and whirr is full of mystery, but of a kind which makes the beholders wonder and utter vague commonplaces about the ingenuity of man. A studio with pictures in various stages of advancement, from the portrait which is as yet a mere ghost in chalk to the finished figure, with bits of tapestry, a gallery of carved wood, armor, spear-heads, swords, mirrors, costumes, and properties of all kinds, is full of mystery. But a chemical laboratory, with its bottles, retorts, crucibles, scales under glass, blow-pipes, glass rods, glass cylinders, jars, pestle and mortar, and its strange smells, is the most mysterious thing in the whole world. We are so well educated now that we no longer expect the bottles to go pop of their own accord. Time was when a lecture on chemistry was given once a year at the Athenæum or Mechanics' Institute, and it was bound to end with a pop. But the laboratory recalls necromancers, poisoners, alchemists, searchers after the divine Elixir—some day they will find it, I dare say—magicians, physicians, conjurers, and all those who formerly worked with a crucible and a furnace; they all belong to the laboratory. And from the laboratory will come, in the future, the secrets that are going to do such wonderful things for the human race. The mysteries of the future, as well as those of the past, are in the laboratory. As for the mysteries of the present, they belong to the chemist himself.

Harold Alleyne was the chemist of the present. He belonged by birth to a family which had not for many generations been called upon to earn their daily bread. It was, in fact, afflicted

with a peerage. Now, a peerage of long standing is apt to develop, in those members of the family who stand near to the title, a certain indolence of brain which only wants encouragement to spring up in every human creature. Our brains would be overrun with this weed were it not for the necessity of work. Nobody except Rabelais has ever thoroughly comprehended the true beneficence of that necessity. Most of us would like nothing better than to stroll and talk between meals or to sit in drowsy content, Black Jack or Brown George at our elbows, and tobacco within reach, either beneath the shade of the trees or beside the fire, nodding at intervals, and from time to time taking another pull. Such a heavenly life had been led by Harold's people for certainly two hundred years—in fact, ever since they fought in the Civil War. They feasted and drank and took their tobacco and slept all through the last century, and, indeed, until the fourth quarter of this, which is now coming to an end. They grew fat of body and sluggish in mind as they continued in their Castle of Indolence. No family ever produced history so blameless, so absolutely barren of incident, so completely devoid of distinction, at this noble family, whose head was the Earl of Hayling. This late nineteenth century, however, is pestilently breaking up all the good old traditions. Among other things, it has produced a most remarkable spirit of activity or restlessness, which is driving the younger sons and the grandsons into the learned professions and into trade and into pursuits which are neither trade nor profession. Formerly they went into the Army or they did nothing. They are now found at the Bar and in the hospitals; they are found on the Stock Exchange and in merchants' offices; they are found on cattle ranches; they are even, I am informed, found on the beach among the isles of the Pacific. This restlessness seized upon the young Earl of Hayling—it was in the Sixties—it was an early case of the disorder; it was then accounted wonderful; it so possessed that young nobleman that he laid down his title and his estates and everything that he had; he did this deliberately and in cold blood, he executed a legal instrument by which his brother, the Honorable Guy, was to receive and to use for himself all his rents until his return; he would have given him the title as well, but he could not. He did, however, assure the Honorable Guy that he should never return. When this was done he put on common clothes, he sought

the Port of London, and he shipped as a sailor before the mast. For ten years nobody heard anything more of him; then his solicitor met him by accident, down Limehouse way, still dressed as a sailor—hale, hearty, and cheerful. The sailor Earl inquired kindly after the welfare of his people, and sent a reassuring message to his brother that he did not mean to return, and then disappeared again. Therefore Harold, whose father, the Honorable Guy, was now dead, knew not whether he was a Peer or not. His uncle might be alive—very likely he was alive; he might have married—most men are married by the time they are fifty; there might be heirs—most men, married men, of fifty do have heirs, male heirs — sons. Meantime, when his father died, the right to draw the rents was lost, and all the money was accumulating for the next Earl, whoever he might be.

The intellectual restlessness which caused his uncle to run away at the age of five-and-twenty passed over Harold's father, who lived in the country, and dozed between meals, and presently passed away peacefully in an after-luncheon nap, at the age of fifty or so. It descended, however, to Harold himself, and made him a man of science; not a dabbler in science—a man of science. At Cambridge he took a first-class in science; he became a Fellow and Lecturer of his college; he worked at science as resolutely as if he had his bread as well as his name to make. The former was already provided for. His father, who enjoyed the family estates for twenty years, left him an income of fifteen hundred a year, which is a good start in life. A man with fifteen hundred a year can do anything in reason. The things that are unreasonable can always be bought, but they are costly. Harold lived in Chelsea. He inhabited a house built for a studio—a tadpole kind of house, all studio and staircase, with two or three little rooms added for feeding and sleeping; the house was, in fact, a studio, and nothing else. He turned the studio into a laboratory. Thus transformed, it was a large room on the first floor. It had a broad north window and a piece of skylight; it was provided with a furnace, a sink, and a tap, for when the chemist is not experimenting he is washing up. There were tables with jets of gas, blow-pipes, and contrivances for holding things in position while they were tortured by the flame into yielding up their secrets; there were shelves of books in French, German, and Italian, as well as English; there was a writing-table of propor-

tions almost equal to that of Madame Elveda's. It was an honest workshop, as complete as a small laboratory can be. One thing it possessed which does not usually belong to a laboratory—the portrait of a girl, a cabinet photograph, clear, bold of outline, true, and natural, taken in Italy, where the lens is clearer and the sun stronger than in this country. It stood in a frame on the table, so that the worker could refresh his soul from time to time by the contemplation of it and the consideration of its owner's virtues.

This morning Harold was at work alone in his laboratory. As it was not many days after his dismissal by the young lady whose portrait stood on the table, he should have presented certain outward and visible marks of discomfiture, rage, disappointment, and despair. I have never with these eyes of mine beheld a rejected lover except one, when the creature actually laughed and jumped over the table for joy, for he had been afraid that he should be accepted. This young man certainly did not jump for joy; nor did he clinch his fist and knit his brows; nor did he sit in the corner and sigh—nothing of the kind. As Charlotte—Werter's Charlotte—went on cutting bread and butter, so this young man went on with his Research. He was always conducting a Research; it had been interrupted by a young lady who told him to think of her no longer except as a friend; he had now resumed his labors until a more favorable opportunity. His face wore the grave and steady look of one who works and watches and thinks and seeks for facts, always new facts. It is the look which ennobles; there is no expression brought to the face by any other work which so much ennobles the face; let our sons take up no lesser and lower work than this. On the table—but he was not sitting at the table—beside the portrait lay a letter from Francesca; he had opened it and read it. Not a word was there about the few words of explanation and the Thing Impossible; it was free and frank, like all her letters, friendly, confidential; she meant to carry out her promise; she would write to him just as if there had been no such episode. Very well; love-making set aside for the present, work could be resumed; meantime one could wait; the future might bring much. Francesca was a girl of many fancies; Melkah, the wise woman, had delivered an Oracle of Comfort and of Hope.

He worked from ten o'clock till noon; what he worked upon

you may find in the "Transactions of the Chemical Society" of last year. While he was still engaged, the door of his laboratory was opened, and a man appeared without being announced. Harold heard nothing. The man waited for a moment. He looked about the room and nodded. He looked at the owner of the place and he smiled. Then he stepped softly across the room and laid his hand upon Harold's shoulder. Harold started, dropped his blow-pipe, and sprang to his feet. "You!" he cried. "You!—Emanuel!—my dear friend, where have you been? What have you been doing? Why have you never written to me?" He seized both hands, and began again: "Where have you been? What have you been doing? Sit down—sit down. Take this chair—so. Now let us talk. Where have you been?"

"I have been, as usual, wandering over the face of the earth." He spoke gently and softly, with a foreign accent.

"Your name is not Emanuel, but Cartaphilus. You are nothing less than the Wandering Jew."

"I am a wandering Jew, that is quite certain. Yet not Cartaphilus."

"When I made your acquaintance you had been wandering for sixteen years—and that is four years ago—"

"Yes, I am still a wanderer. I wander about the world and look on. It is very interesting."

"You ought to write down what you know."

"I will, perhaps, some day, but one gets out of the habit of writing. The ancients meditated; the moderns write. I prefer the ancient practice."

"They died, and their meditations were lost."

"They returned to the earth. On that very day their thoughts perished. Perhaps, my friend—perhaps; if anything ever perishes. Yes, I have been wandering for more than twenty years. I began my travels first in order to get rid of a certain trouble. It was a grievous trouble, and I had to get as far away from it as possible. It was a trouble, too, that could not be shaken off—like a humpback. But, by the help of distance, it might sometimes be forgotten. So I wandered about the world, and succeeded in sometimes forgetting this trouble."

"Why did you not write to me?"

"I lost your address. When I got back to London I looked for it in the Directory and found it, and here I am."

"What about your scientific ideas? You were as full of science as of philosophy and prophecy."

"I will tell you presently. Is this your laboratory?—your own?"

"My own. Your own, if you like. Oh! not in Spanish parlance. It is your own to use whenever you please—all day long—every day."

"Thanks. I will use it, if only as a proof that you have not forgotten me."

"Forgotten you, Emanuel! How could I forget you?" Again he held out both hands. "How could I ever forget the manner of meeting you? It was in the Desert east of Petra. There I found the man of science—the Philosopher—with a tribe of Bedouins, wandering with them, living with them, dressed in their dress, only with spectacles. Never shall I forget my astonishment when one of those sons of the Desert, but with spectacles, addressed me in German, French, and English."

"It was a happy meeting. As for me, wherever I go, I always dress like the people and talk their language."

"Hang it! one must first learn their language."

"That is easy; mostly they are only dialects."

"Easy to you, perhaps. Then that journey across the Desert to the Euphrates, passed on from tribe to tribe, with you to talk for me and with me—I suppose you think it easy for me to forget that? And the journey up the valley of the Euphrates, among the mounds and the ruins and the lions. Easy to forget that, of course?"

"I remember that journey—so—so well."

"We were together six months, and now it seems so short a time and yet so long. I learned more from you in that short half-year than I learned in all my life before from all the books. Forget you, Emanuel? Why, you poured ideas into my brain; you preached to me; you prophesied. Forget you? Why, when you talked you carried my spirit away. I forgot everything, I heard nothing, I saw nothing, except what you wished me to see and to hear and to think. Is there another man in the world who has this power, I wonder? You are the last of the prophets. I understand now what those felt who listened to the Great Prophets of old. You shall talk to me again, if you will. I wonder whether in this crowded town you will have the same power as you possessed in the wild free air of the Desert."

"It is the thing that is said—the mind that receives—not the place where the thing is said. My friend, it is because you are what you are—able to receive and understand—that you were carried away. One might say the same thing to a thousand men, and they would not be moved in the least—not in the least. But it is pleasant—oh! it is very pleasant"—Emanuel spoke gently, with his musical voice—"to hear such words. Let us agree never to forget that journey. We saw many men; we pleased ourselves with restoring the old civilization where it was born; we learned a good deal. As for what I said, I had many things to say, I remember. When one wanders about, many ideas come to one. But friendship exaggerates; you speak too well of my poor thoughts. Yet to receive another man's thoughts demands, at least, an equal—sometimes a higher—nature. Perhaps the air of the Desert helped."

"It is the finest air in all the world. It lifts the soul, Emanuel. I am taller and bigger since I drank that air."

"As for me, it is my native air. The Jew comes from the Desert; he wandered for forty years in that great Syrian Desert, till two men only were left of all those who came out of Egypt. All those were dead—they and their slavish minds. When these were dead, and the freedom of the Desert strong in the souls of their children, Joshua led them on to conquest. We are children of the Desert."

"Yes, you were at home there. The place inspired you. Here was a man with science without a laboratory; of learning without books; a philosopher without paper and pen; a teacher with but one disciple; a traveller without money; a man of ideas careless whether they could be given to the world or not; a man without ambitions, without desires, content with the lowest. The last of the Prophets was also the last of the Pilgrims."

"Since you say so, Harold."

"When last we parted it was at Sidon. I was going on to Beyrout; you were going to make your way to Damascus. Heavens! how dull and flat it was without you! But you are home, and now we will talk again."

"I went on to Damascus. In the Lebanon some robbers stripped me of all my clothes—I had nothing else—and they left me my note-book. So I was once more in the condition in

which you found me. But I got to the city, where I found many of our People, and I stayed there a long time."

"There is no laboratory at Damascus, I suppose?"

"No. I thought about a good many things, and I worked at my trade to pay my way. I discovered, as I always do, a man who would buy, in order to sell for more money, as much as I would do for him. No man will ever starve who can by working put money into another man's hands. I looked about for books—the old Arabic books—in Damascus, but I found no profit in them. Books are chiefly for the ignorant, and they deceive as much as they lead. There was a physician in Damascus who boasted himself to be a chemist—he was one of our People. He wanted me to make things for him—things to make a woman's eyes bright and her skin soft, things to make an old man young again—so that he might sell them and grow rich. I refused. He became importunate. So I left the place. Why should I make men rich? Besides, I was restless."

"Wherefore?"

"I was restless because I was by this time wholly possessed with a thought. It was such a thought as threatened never to take shape, but always to possess me to the end. Men whom such a thought possesses go mad. I believed that I was going mad unless I could get rid of that thought. So I arose and took my staff and set out again."

"Which way this time?"

"I was so filled with my thought that I took little note of where I went or what I saw. First I went over the mountains to Hamath and Aleppo, now I struck the valley of the Euphrates, and so up into Armenia. It was a long walk—six hundred miles, I believe. It was lonely. There were dangers from wild beasts as well as from robbers. But I feared no dangers; I never fell into any worse trouble than being robbed of my clothes. I was always thinking as I went along about this great idea of mine. Presently—I do not remember the way—I got to Trebizonde. Here I found many of my People, and I stayed there for a while. But this thought of mine, which would not leave me day or night, made me restless again, and I went away from Trebizonde and travelled eastward, and presently found myself at Tiflis—among the Russians—and at Astrakhan—and so into European Russia, and then—then—ah!—then—"

"You have done more than think of something, Emanuel; you have discovered something."

"Yes," he replied, simply, "I have; and I have come to England in order to tell you, and you alone."

"I see it in your eyes. Why, I was always sure you would. A man with your wealth of ideas is bound to discover things. Some men poke about purblind. You have got eyes that see through a stone wall."

Emanuel pulled out of his pocket a little packet of papers tied up with string. It was significant that the paper was of the commonest and the string of the poorest. "There is my secret," he said. "It is there for you to read, with the history of how I came upon it. I give it to you; do what you will with it. Only do not open the packet yet—lock it up somewhere. Open it and read it after I have told you what it is."

There was a small safe standing in one corner of the laboratory; Harold opened it and placed the packet within. "There!" he said, locking the door again. "So much is easy. You will tell me more, my friend, when you please—I shall not ask." He spoke carelessly. A chemical discovery may be from a scientific point of view most important, yet not a thing calculated to fire the imagination—a combination of gas; a new metal; how to work an old metal; a new salt with properties previously unsuspected. It would wait.

"Is the safe fire-proof?" asked Emanuel, anxiously.

"It is said to be—I hope it will not be tested. In such a simple thing it is always best to accept the assurance of the maker. But, indeed, I think it is. Do not be anxious about it."

Emanuel heaved—or breathed—or fetched—I think he fetched—a deep, deep sigh. "It is out of my hands at last. To-night I shall sleep in peace. The house may catch fire and I shall not mind; I may be run over in the street and killed, and it will not matter at all. It will make no difference to the world, since the thing is in your hands."

"But, Emanuel, is it so very great a secret, then?"

"It is great enough—you will not believe this until you learn what it is—great enough, I say, to change the whole future of the world."

Harold opened his eyes and his mouth. The latter gesture is unworthy a philosopher, but it is traditional—and it is conven-

tional. It means astonishment, combined, in some cases, with incredulity.

"Change the future of the world?" he echoed.

"As only a chemical discovery can. Gunpowder, steam, electricity, anæsthetics—we get them all through chemistry. This is another victory over the forces of Nature."

"When will you tell me, Emanuel?"

"Presently. Meantime"—he laughed gently—"find me the largest adjective in your language: 'stupendous'—'amazing'—'epoch-making'—what you will, and keep it ready for use. Oh! I did well to be restless, since I was possessed with such a discovery."

"But— Good Heavens!"

"Yes. I want to tell it after my own fashion. You remember how we used to talk, after nightfall, outside the tents, in the cool dry air which stimulates the brain better than champagne—well, I want to talk to you again like that and so tell you thus. Patience, my friend, for a little. Now think! I had that secret in my mind, fully grown, proved, and ready to be put into practice—not written, not communicated to anybody, but lying in my mind—and I was only one of a company—a herd—of starving wretches driven across Russia, penniless and in rags, with this great Thing newly born and living in my head. Oh! The words, the formula, the letters burned themselves in my brain. All day long I saw them written in the sky; all night long a voice shouted them in my ears. I had no means of writing anything—there was neither paper nor pencil. Then I thought what if I were to die? Some of our company did die. Fatigue, exposure, anguish, bad food, killed many of them. What if the same causes killed me? Men die suddenly at any time. The heart stops; there is an end. Something falls upon them and kills them; they are murdered; they fall sick and die; then all their knowledge dies with them. To the next world we carry neither our wisdom nor our foolishness, neither our wealth nor our poverty. The terror of it alone was near to killing me. But I did not die. When we arrived at a place with some civilization I hastened to write it down. Yes, even before washing and eating, I wrote it down and addressed it with your name—Harold Alleyne, London. Even then I had no rest, because it might be stolen and might fall into the hands of some one who— Well, it is safe at last. I

have come across Europe with the packet in my hands. I have not lost it, I have not been robbed, the train was not destroyed by a collision, nor was the steamer wrecked. The packet is safe at last and in your hands."

"To say"—Harold tried to repress his own excitement—"to say that you have made me curious is to say a thing ridiculous. I am burning to know—but you shall tell me at your own time. I have your secret locked up safely."

"You shall use it as you like. I give it to you."

"Nonsense! How can I make use of your discovery? By selling it? You would scarcely approve of that. If you honor me with your confidence that is everything to me. It is your discovery. You shall have the honor and the fame of it."

Emanuel shook his head.

"I want neither honor nor fame," he said. "I want to do something—if possible, something great—before I go hence and am no more seen. I am a lonely man, with neither wife nor child. What can it matter when I am dead if my name is spoken of all over the world? That is a great thing, but the inventor—the man to whom the discovery was granted—is such a man that he does quite as well to keep unknown. Let him who has children make himself known; it is for their advantage; honor to him may mean consideration to them. I have no children to remember me."

"You are not old—you may still marry and have children."

"Impossible. If for no other reason, because I am poor. The woman whom I could marry would not marry me."

"Some chemists turn their discoveries into gold."

"Yes. I have known many such"—he laughed a little. "I told you of the Physician of Damascus. There was also another, a chemist in Munich—one of the People. I found something by which he could make money—a new dye, a new kind of soap, something foolish. He proposed to make me a partner if I would keep on inventing things out of which he could make money. Oh, I was to become so rich, so rich! But I left him and came away. I had my carving tools, and I left him to his money—to his more money. And they say there is no more idolatry! Now, behold a thing which you have not considered, because you think it does not concern you. Nay, you have never been taught it. All the curses and troubles, the consequences and results of

[See page 129

"SHE SAT DOWN ON THE HEARTH-RUG IN ORIENTAL FASHION"

wickedness and ignorance, which afflict humanity fall with two-fold force upon the Chosen People. Whatever we do, whatever we suffer, it is of a kind more intense than falls upon others. See how miserably poor are our poor; not commonly poor, like your people, but miserably, cruelly poor; see how those of us who pursue money work for it with an ardor unknown to your people. In all things we are in extreme. Well, let there be one man, at least, in the world—Jew or Christian—who does not want money. And let me be that man."

"*Soit.* You shall be that man. You shall give your discovery to the world. Yet you may retain for yourself—and laudably—the honor and the glory of it. You would not refuse such honor as one man of science gives to another for a great achievement."

"We will speak of that hereafter. I have told you, partly, why I came here. Now, for the present, I must go." He rose, but lingered a while. "It is very good to see your face again, my friend—the only friend I have in this country. Other friends I have found since I began to go up and down the face of the earth; but you are the best. For you are of those who can draw out of a man whatever the Lord—or the Devil—has put into him, his best or his worst. You know not your own power. Every man has his own—what is it?—his own magnetic power. Some make men reveal themselves—you are one; a woman who loved you would reveal all her soul to you. Some make men listen, follow, fight, die, all with that magnetic power. Chemistry cannot control it or discover it. Well, we talked in the Desert; in this crowded city it is difficult to talk. My own place is more open. Will you come to see me in my lodging?"

"Where are you staying?"

"It is a long way from here, but you can reach it by train. Here is my address." He wrote it on a slip of paper. "I lodge in the house of one Bernard, to whom I was recommended by one of our People. I believe he lives by betting on horses. His daughter appears to be respectable. She teaches music—chiefly, I believe, an instrument called the banjo. When one begins to think, its tinkling is not perceived."

"Shall I come to-morrow?"

"No, Harold. Nor the next day. I have something else to say with it. Let me think. There is no hurry, and now that

you have the packet in your possession I can rest and think. I will write to you or call upon you."

"But it must be soon, Emanuel. What! You have made a discovery which will change the future of the world? You have made a discovery which you call stupendous, and you keep the world waiting?"

"All in good time, my friend. Remember, I have come straight from Russia with this secret in my brain. I want to rest a little and to think. There are other things to say. Let me rest and think."

"You shall rest and think as long as you please, Emanuel. You shall tell me when you please and how you please, and I will not be impatient. You are the master of your own secret. But —to change the future of the world? What have you found that will change the future of the world? There—there—I will wait. In your own good time."

"I have taken—I do not know why—certain persons advised it—an English name; many of my People do that for their own purposes. I am one Ellis for the time."

"Emanuel Ellis. Good. To me you are always plain Emanuel."

"I will be anything you please, so that you do not forget me. I was wondering as I came along whether you would remember me or not. Four years is a long time for a young man to remember. In youth one should live a full rich life, always making new friends, learning new things, having new experiences. One has still so much to learn. Yet you have not forgotten your friend of four years since. It is very good."

His eyes fell upon the photograph on the table. He started, looked at it again, caught it up eagerly. Then he put it down with a sigh. "Ah!" he cried, "I thought I remembered the face. It is like a woman I knew twenty years ago. But she must now be old. This girl is something like her. Curious! Your friend is a Jewess."

"No; she is a Moor—a Spanish Moor."

"There are no Spanish Moors. There are Spaniards of Moorish descent, but they are long since mixed and lost in the general population. This girl is of the Spanish Jews, like me." He took up the photograph again. "Strange! there certainly is in her face the resemblance that I fancied. Now I have lost it—now it

comes again. How can a picture change its expression? Nay; it is a trick of memory. Well, my friend"—he replaced the photograph—"it is the face of a Spanish Jewess. There are many women like her in Spain."

"No, Emanuel. There is none like this woman in all the world."

"Is that so, my friend? Is that so? Then," he said, solemnly, "the Lord grant you your heart's desire and never to tire of it—never to wonder why you desired it, never to wish it changed!"

CHAPTER IX

THE COUSINS

"Mr. Sydney Bernard, Mr. Aldebert Angelo."

Madame Elveda took the cards from the salver, read them aloud, and looked up.

"Who are these gentlemen?"

"They ask to see you, madame."

"What is their business? What do they want? Are they gentlemen?"

"They are dressed like gentlemen, madame," replied the servant, cautiously. "They want to see you on business of importance, they say."

Madame Elveda hesitated a moment. "In that case," she said, "show them in."

She was sitting in her own room alone; it was about four in the afternoon.

When her two visitors appeared she changed color slightly, for they belonged to the People whom she had disowned and to the religion she had deserted for twenty years. She rose. "You wish to see me, gentlemen?"

"If you please, madame," one of them replied, bowing.

"Will you kindly proceed straight to the business which has brought you here? If it is likely to be a long business you had better take chairs."

One of the two was apparently a prosperous man of business—well dressed, fat, and polite—the one who bowed. The other, lean and sharp-eyed, looked round the room curiously, and gazed unabashed upon the lady without bowing at all. He was dressed in sporting guise. You have seen both these gentlemen already.

They took chairs and sat down side by side before the table. Madame Elveda looked at their cards again and lifted her pince-nez. The manner of her doing this conveyed a reproach—a sug-

gestion—of intrusion. However, she sat down again and took up a paper-knife, with which she tapped the table.

"Now, gentlemen, if you please. You represent some Cause—you want a subscription."

"No," said the man of the Turf, sharply, "we want no subscription, and we represent no Cause."

"Not at all," added the merchant, but softly; "we neither invite nor give subscriptions to any Cause. We are quite satisfied with the law of the land for the protection of order and the relief of the unfortunate. So long as the law of the land allows us to carry our own business for ourselves we are satisfied."

"Well, gentlemen, in your own way and at your own time. I suppose that your own time is valuable."

"I will introduce our business," the man of commerce went on, "by introducing ourselves—my brother and myself. My name is, in business, Aldebert Angelo. My private residence is in this road, not many doors from you, Madame Elveda. You will therefore perceive, to begin with, that I am a substantial man."

"He is a substantial man," echoed the other.

"I have a little place in Mortimer Street, of which you may have heard. Pictures, I see you have"—he looked round the room—"and a little bric-à-brac. That vase between the windows looks a pretty thing. At my place there are always pictures and bric-à-brac and valuable things to be seen. All the collectors know me."

"They all know him well," echoed the other man.

"I have at the same time other little things going."

"Little things?" echoed the brother. "He runs a theatre, and he's got a financial paper, and shares in a sporting paper—little things, he calls them."

"My brother here," continued the Merchant Adventurer, "is a man very well known in certain circles. Perhaps you are not familiar with the Turf? My brother is a racing man, a betting man, a book-maker. As such he is well known and deeply respected as a man of his word, and a substantial man—"

"Except—" his brother interrupted.

"Of course, except on the occasion of continued bad luck. There are vicissitudes, as we may say, ups and downs in every line of life. I myself could speak of losses which would amaze

you—enough to make most men's hair turn gray. But, my brother, under the name of Sydney Bernard—or Syd, as he is familiarly called by his friends—carries on large transactions with enormous risks."

"Enormous!" echoed the sportsman. "But these risks eat into business. But I am doing pretty well—not like my brother here, but pretty well."

"Indeed!" Madame Elveda received these communications with profound coldness, looking the two men straight in the face. To see them the more plainly and the better to mark her sense of cold astonishment, she again put up her eye-glasses. "I do not at all understand why I am told these interesting facts."

"You soon will," said Mr. Bernard.

"Excuse me, brother," with softness. "We will explain to Madame Elveda immediately. Remember, we are strangers to her, and intruders. Patience! Madame, we have informed you of these particulars in order that you may not begin by suspecting that we have come to borrow or to ask anything of you. We have no designs upon your fortune, believe me. Now, we carry on our trade, as is often the custom of our People, under assumed names. I am Aldebert Angelo in business; among ourselves I am Solomon Albu." Madame Elveda's face flushed. "My brother, who is Sydney Bernard in business, among his own friends is Isaac Albu—and—Madame Elveda—we are your cousins."

"My cousins?" She turned from crimson to pallor, like a school-girl. "My cousins? I was not aware that I had any."

"Your cousins. Your second cousins," said the merchant. "We had the same great-grandfather. Our grandfathers were brothers."

"Your second cousins," repeated Mr. Bernard.

"Suppose that to be the case, I neither deny nor accept the fact. I say that I neither refuse nor recognize the cousinship. I am still unable to understand why you have called upon me or what you want with me." She spoke with apparent unconcern, but her hand trembled. The unexpected appearance of a forgotten cousin may at any time be more than embarrassing. The last thing Madame Elveda looked for was the appearance of cousins in London.

Then the man of the Turf took up the parable, speaking

roughly. His manner was quick; he wanted the softness of his brother; no doubt his profession explained the difference. "You will do just as you please," he said, "about acknowledging the cousinship. It is there, you know, whether you acknowledge it or not. You can't choose your relations, however proud you may get. As for us, however, we've got nothing to gain from you and nothing to ask of you. You may disown us if you like; if you do, we are not going out of our way to claim cousinship. Very likely you may want to disown all your family. Do so if you like—nobody cares; but you belong to them all the same. Remember that. You are not too polite to us, and, this visit over, I don't think we shall want to trouble you again."

"If I only understood the reason of this visit," said Madame Elveda, a little more politely; "if you would only be so good as to tell me why you came at all. Can you not perceive that when one has lived forty years and more without knowing that one has cousins the question is very natural—can we not very comfortably continue apart for the rest of our lives?"

"Presently, presently," Mr. Aldebert Angelo answered, softly. "We'll come to that presently. My brother is hasty—on the Turf one has to be prompt. In business we learn to make allowance. Well, Madame Elveda, you are naturally a little surprised at so unexpected a visit, and one can understand you are not anxious to find out a lot of cousins who may want assistance from you. Poor relations are a nuisance always, even to the richest. But then, you see, we've all got poor relations, especially we of the People, because we keep our genealogies. Now let me explain to you more clearly who we are. It is going back a hundred years and more. Your grandfather and our grandfather were brothers; they were born about the year 1785 in the Ghetto of Rome; they were by descent Spanish—Sephardim. Their ancestors were settled in Spain from time immemorial; they went to Spain before the Maccabees even. You remember that?"

Madame shook her head—a gesture which might mean anything.

"It is true all the same," said Mr. Sydney Bernard, snorting, "whether you remember it or not. What! Not remember your own grandfather?"

"Peace, brother. Let me go on. They were very poor boys, but the Revolution came, and after the Revolution the Wars

Then they got their chance. That was a splendid time for poor boys. Never before had our People found such a chance. My grandfather attached himself, when he was quite a lad, to the French armies as a sutler, you know. Your grandfather joined the other side. My grandfather wasn't lucky. Either he couldn't get the contracts he wanted, or else he couldn't get paid, or the French armies went without contracts at all—the men foraged and looted for their support—I don't know. He followed the French armies, anyhow. Perhaps it was only with a cask of brandy in a cart; perhaps it was with a singin' show; he went where they went, and he had his ups and downs. The Moscow business completely broke him up; after that he brought whatever money he had saved from the wreck—it wasn't much—over here, and settled in Whitechapel in a humble way. That is his history, and we are his grandsons; there is another of us, brother Ezekiel, who hasn't got on so well as we two—you may find him any day in his shop in Wentworth Street. Yet Ezekiel, he does pretty well—pretty well—in his small way. We have a sister, too, but she is in the Argentine Republic with her husband. Also in quite a small way."

Madame Elveda inclined her head, recovering her dignity. "It is many years," she said, "since I was reminded of the family history — my grandfather's brother was a being whose existence was never revealed to me, I assure you. That part of it is quite new to me, and I had no reason to suspect the existence of this branch of the family. Pray believe so much; and, again, one naturally puts the question, If for forty years we have lived apart, ignorant of each other, why not continue? You say that you want nothing of me. Certainly I want nothing of you."

"One moment; we will come to that immediately. Let us return to the family history. Your grandfather, on the other hand, was a favorite of fortune. Everything, from the very beginning, prospered with him. Ah!" — the speaker sighed and rubbed his hands—"it is a beautiful history! It makes one happy only to think of such chances offered and such chances seized. He was always on the other side—against the French. His side sometimes lost their battles, but they paid their contractors. He worked his way up, beginning, like his brother, with a cask of brandy and a cart, as a sutler and a camp-follower. One can see him working his way upward, taking small sub-contracts,

and so getting on. His big job was with the British army in Spain. The French sacked and pillaged, and paid nobody. The British troops took nothing, but paid for everything; and they paid the contractor. Albu supplied them. You will find it written in the books that one Albu found them bacon, beef, pork, and bread; but it is not in the books what Albu made out of it for himself." He laughed softly. "Nobody knows that except you, cousin. Yet everybody knew that he left a very large fortune. He had only one son—your father. Unlike most of us, your father was content with what he had—to be sure, it was a good heap—and he left it all to you, his only daughter. You were born about the year 1849, in Paris, which your father preferred to any other place on account of its pleasures. Your father enjoyed life, as a rich man should. He had every right to all the pleasures that money can command. He died in 1869, the year before the War. You see, I know your history pretty well. You came of age in 1870, and you married, being then in Paris, one Emanuel Elveda, also, like yourself, of the Sephardim. You were married in the Synagogue, Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth. He was a young man of great scientific attainments, but he had no money. You thought to rule the house because you had the money; but you were wrong. And as you would not obey him, your husband left you. He went abroad, and is, I suppose, dead. There, cousin, is the whole of your family history —and ours."

"Well, these details are in the main true; at all events, I shall not dispute them. Again, seeing that I have long since cut myself off from any connection with my own People—whom I have left entirely—and seeing you have no personal interests to advance, I am still at a loss to understand why you came."

"We knew beforehand that we should be coldly received. You have separated from us; you have a daughter who has been taught to hate her own People, and you pretend to be of Moorish descent."

"My daughter shall never, if I can help it, belong to a People which keeps its women in subjection."

Mr. Angelo bowed. "Pardon me," he said, softly, but with dignity; "but she does belong to that People. You may desert your own folk, but you cannot cast them off. The ties of family cannot be cut asunder. In times of trouble, which never fail to

arrive, there will be no one to help you—no one to whom you can turn—but your own People. You can never make friends, real friends, outside your kith and kin. A Frenchman may become the friend of an Englishman, but true friendship between Jew and Christian is impossible."

"Is this what you came to say?"

"It is. You thought that you would have no relations at all; you wished to be quite alone in the world rather than belong to the People; you slipped out of the Synagogue; you thought, because you no longer openly belonged to us, that you had become quite free of us. Well, now you know that you have whole families of cousins. Do not be afraid of them. They will not annoy you in any way; they will not cross your path or place themselves in your way or ask anything of you. But when you are in doubt or trouble you can remember that you have cousins, and you can come to us. You are a woman and alone, and you have a Child. When you fall into trouble you can come to us. You are rich; where there is money there are sharks. When they try to rob you, remember that you can come to us. In any case of difficulty or doubt, always remember that we are ready to advise and to protect you."

"There!" said Mr. Sydney Bernard. "That's the meaning of the whole business. My brother offers to advise you as to your investments. It is a most dreadful thing to think of all this money being wasted and lost through its being in the hands of a woman who knows nothing. Take my brother's offer. He won't charge you anything, he won't put your money in any of his own ventures, and he'll double it for you if it was millions. And mind! Not a cent for himself. This is a *bona fide* offer, all out of his good heart—because you are his cousin. My brother here has got the best heart in the world, and if you have any doubt about his position, go and look at his house, as big as this, and crammed with pictures and china and things. Or you should look into his place in Mortimer Street, where you would be astonished. The sight alone would make you feel confidence in him."

"I am much obliged to you both, gentlemen," said madame, "but really, so far, I have done very well for myself; I want no advice or assistance of any kind. As for placing my affairs in the hands of either of you, may I remind you that you are perfect strangers to me?"

"What he feels," Mr. Bernard continued, "even more than I, is the danger that all this money of yours may be lost. What? You are out of the Synagogue just now, but you'll come back some day, and so will your daughter. Better have your money looked after while you can."

"Hard to make; hard to keep; easy to lose," said the merchant. "Not that I am prepared to take over or to propose the management of your great estates. I only offer my best advice, if you will allow me to advise. Money has wings."

"Nobody knows this better than ourselves," the man of the Turf continued. "All Jews are gamblers; we can't sit down; we are never contented. We must be speculating, sporting, gambling—it is our life. Here's my brother, not content with his big business, must needs have his theatre and his paper. There's more sport to be got out of a theatre than out of a dozen racecourses. This ought not to make you trust him less, but more. You dabble yourself, no doubt, in something."

Madame inclined her head again, and once more tapped the table with her paper-knife.

"We first heard of you," the merchant continued, "through my daughter, who was at Newnham with yours; Clara Angelo her name is. She played Esther in the play you had the other night. Oh! I heard all about it. When she talked about Francesca Elveda, of course I knew she must be one of our People. Then I made inquiry, and learned that Isabel Albu had married one Emanuel Elveda. So we pieced it all together."

"Clara Angelo?" Madame looked astonished. "Is she your daughter? Why, I thought—"

"Clara does look like a Christian sometimes. Fair hair and blue eyes; yet there's always a something, come to look a little closer. She knows nothing about the cousinship, though; we've told nobody, and we're not going to tell anybody. Clara knows what people she belongs to—why not? But she knows nothing about the Elvedas, and I don't think she knows about the sutler. Yes, Clara is your daughter's friend, and they don't know that they are cousins. Nice girl, my Clara, isn't she? Accomplished girl, well-educated girl, fit for the highest Society—even your own, cousin."

Madame bowed again gravely. Then she rose. The two men rose too.

"I ought to thank you both," she said. "I feel that I ought to take this visit as an act of kindness—"

"We are cousins," said Mr. Angelo; "that means everything."

"You evidently regard me as still a woman of your religion, under the tutelage of men, therefore in need of protection and guidance. I assure you that I need no protection; I am perfectly well able to protect myself. As for my fortune, it is placed in what I consider safety; it has not been disturbed for a great many years, and I do not want to disturb it. I discovered long ago that if I would rescue my child from the disgraceful subjection of women I must leave the People; with this view I have tried to keep from her the origin of our family; she believes herself Moorish, as you know—that is the sole reason of what might appear to you a deception otherwise foolish. When I parted with my husband I parted with the People. I resolved then that I would never acknowledge them again, nor would I have any friendship with them. If I could not continue with the man who possessed everything that is noblest in the race, I would no longer continue with the rest. I belong to you no longer. Write me as one dead. I have left your religion."

"Are you, then, a Christian?" The man of the Turf turned upon her fiercely.

She hesitated. "No," she said, "I am not, though I have sometimes been tempted; but I have brought up my daughter in freedom of the Law. She knows nothing about it."

"Is she a Christian?"

"I have never asked her. It is for her to choose any form of faith that best satisfies her soul. I have brought her up, I say, in absolute freedom. She knows no law except the law of brotherly love."

"That is our Law as well, cousin," said the merchant, gently.

"You have taught her to despise her own People," said the other, roughly.

"What she may have learned from books and papers and the common talk I know not. I have not talked with her about the People at all. If the People are despised by the world, perhaps she despises them—I do not know and I do not care. I have left her to form her own conclusions—her own prejudices, if you please—on this as in everything else. But, indeed, I know not

why I should be defending my own conduct or explaining it or allowing you to discuss it. Let this conversation cease."

"One moment!"—the man of the Turf pushed aside his softer brother—"I must and will speak! We are of the same family—the girl belongs to us. I will speak, brother! I say, cousin"—he turned upon madame with alarming fierceness—"that you have done badly; you have done foolishly. You cannot separate yourself from your own People." Her husband had uttered the same warning twenty years before. "You cannot; you may try, but it is impossible. We are stamped with the seal of the race, so that everybody as we pass along the street may cry out if he likes, 'Jew! Jew! Jew!'" The old fierceness of his race, which has never died out in the Spanish Jew, blazed up in this man. Madame Elveda listened, constrained to listen by his passion. Could one have believed that this quiet-looking, middle-aged person could become suddenly so vehement? "'Jew! Jew!'" he cried, "they did yell after us in the old days when your grandfather lived in the Roman Ghetto; but they don't any longer. No, no—tables are turned. They whisper softly after us, 'There goes the Jew, the rich Jew, the clever Jew, the great Jew, the powerful Jew!'"

"Rich and powerful," murmured the merchant.

"Why, we are marching to the front in everything. Who gets rich in business? The Jew. Everywhere the Jew beats the dull-witted Christian. Who controls the financial world? The Jew."

"The financial world," said the merchant, "is the whole world."

"Who are the best at everything? The Jews. Your People—the People you despise—*you!* Before long the whole world will be ours. Until this century we have never had our chance. Now it has come. And such a time, when the last great triumph of the People is beginning, you choose for teaching your daughter—*you!*—to despise her own—the conquering race!"

Mr. Aldebert Angelo held up his hand and shook his head. Madame Elveda made no reply at all. The man frightened her with his vehemence. She wanted him to go; she wanted to sit down and think about it. The speaker snorted, and went on:

"Call yourself a Moor! Gar-r-r! All the world knows and laughs. Why"— he took up a hand-glass that lay upon the

table, and held it before her face brutally—"what does that tell you? What does it cry aloud? Moor! No; but Jew! Jew! Jew! Jewess! Jewess! Jewess! You to be ashamed of your race? You to hide the truth of her birth from your own daughter? You to make the girl ashamed of her father?"

"Enough said," his brother interposed. "Our cousin will follow her own course. Meantime, cousin, think over what I have said. My brother is hasty, but he means well, and he is quite right. Now just think a bit; we've called in friendliness. And listen!" He held up a forefinger of admonition. "Overhaul your investments, cousin. If you find any doubtful things, sell out—sell out—sell out. Inquire into your foreign shares—there is danger—there is danger everywhere. Oh! no one knows how riches take wings and fly—all of a sudden—the savings of a century—of generations—the industry of a lifetime—gone—gone—gone! Cousin, take care. Mind—I know—I have heard things—I give you warning. Mind, I say; I have heard things; I speak not lightly when money is in question."

Madame Elveda bowed coldly. She could not find a word of friendliness for her cousins, who wanted nothing of her, but came to warn and help her because they were cousins.

Her unwelcome visitors turned and walked out of the room, the man of the Turf first. At the door the merchant stopped and returned.

"Cousin," he said, solemnly, "heed my warning. I say that I have heard things from Paris, where you have cousins on your husband's side, and I have correspondents and business friends. Look into your affairs, I entreat you, without delay. What I have heard is but rumor. Only look into your affairs. Appoint some one to go over and look into things. Good heavens! Such a noble—such a princely fortune! Cousin! Blood is thicker than water. Let us save your fortune—for yourself."

"My affairs, thank you, have been settled for twenty years. My agent has nothing to do but to receive the dividends."

He bowed, spread his hands, shook his head, and walked away.

When the door closed, Madame Elveda took up a small hand-glass that lay upon the table and looked at her own face in it.

"Yes," she murmured, "the man was right. Jewess!—Jewess!—Jewess! All the world can see. No disguise can change the face. Always the same face!—the same face through all the

ages! It is on Egyptian monuments four thousand years old—always the same face—the same stamp upon it. Must Francesca know? Albu, the contractor—the man who supplied bacon—the Jew who sold bacon—to the British army—Albu, the Jew! I have given her a better ancestor, Elveda, the Moor—the statesman—the pretended Catholic. And yet—" Again she looked at the glass. "Yet all the world—whatever I have pretended—must know—must know—" she hurled the glass into the fireplace, where it broke into a thousand fragments. "Oh! we cannot escape—we cannot escape! All the world can cry out if they like, 'Jewess! Jewess! Jewess!'"

She threw herself into her chair and sat there thinking. The edifice she had been building for twenty years threatened to fall to pieces at a breath. For twenty years she had forgotten that all the world, looking at her face, would recognize her race; she had been shamming. She had forgotten that Francesca, beautiful as she was, had the same seal upon her brow. There is a typical face for every nation; the typical Frenchman, German, Spaniard, Scot, Irishman; but there are Frenchmen who might be Germans and Scots who might be Spaniards. Of all white races, the Jew is the only one who can never be mistaken. Of Moorish descent—it was a fine pretence—it did very well for the girl; it touched her romantic side; but one had only to look at her, and the world could cry out "Jewess! Jewess! Jewess!"

What did her cousin mean by his talk about the People going to rule everything—the conquering race? When a woman shuts herself out of the world, making no intimate friends, wandering about in foreign countries for twenty years alone with her child, not going into society and not conversing with men except as mere acquaintances, she is in danger of intensifying her prejudices. Madame Elveda started with the most violent hatred of the People to whom she belonged and whom she had deserted. They were the oppressors of women, according to her new lights. She was a renegade, therefore she hated her former cause. Naturally, this prejudice grew by being encouraged in her brain until it became morbid. It was now a disease. People, again, by covering up a thing, hiding it away and never thinking about it, actually learn to forget it, in time—and this, though they must know that the whole world is perfectly aware of it, and talks freely about it. We forget all kinds of little personal humiliations,

disappointments, and failures; we forget, if we can, all the unpleasant things, which is the reason why many men are so forgiving in disposition. This lady, by long practice, had clean forgotten and put out of her mind the history of her family, including the origin of her fortune—the Ghetto of Rome, the sutler and camp-follower, the contracts for bacon and beef, and the connection with the Ancient People.

Now she was rudely reminded of it. The cousins said that they were not going to talk—they said so. Who was to prevent their talking? What confidence could be placed in the word of a betting-man and a bric-à-brac seller? Of course they would talk; some bruit of it would reach Francesca—Francesca! Her mother flamed in the cheek like a school-girl only to think that Francesca should find out the deception—her own mother's deception.

It will be seen that the poor lady had a good deal to think of. On one point, however, she did not think. Her cousin had warned her solemnly about her investments. "Danger was in the air," he said. Alas! her mind was too full of other dangers to think of this.

At five o'clock the old woman, once the nurse, now the faithful retainer, entered the room bearing a tray with tea. Madame often took her afternoon tea in this solitary fashion. Melkah put the tray on the table and looked at her mistress. "You are in trouble?" she said.

She sat down on the hearth-rug in Oriental fashion, and throwing her shawl over her head, she waited.

"Melkah," said her mistress, "you remember the old time, before I was married?"

"Surely I remember."

"I wanted, above all things, freedom. In the old religion, with their six hundred laws and their subjection of women, I choked. Then I married, hoping to get freedom that way. But the married state is worse than the single. So my husband and I parted, and I had Francesca."

The old woman nodded. "We had Francesca," she said; "we had the girl."

"Tell me, Melkah—you know what she has been told—does she suspect the truth?"

"No."

"Does she despise—her own People?"

"She does."

"Would it make her unhappy to learn the truth?"

"It would."

"We must always keep the truth from her. We must, Melkah, oh, we must!"

Melkah laughed. "The truth is written on your face," she said, speaking like the two cousins, "and on her own. She has only to look in the glass. She calls herself a Moor. Some day she must find out."

Her mistress sat silent.

"It is not well done," Melkah went on, with the familiarity of an old servant. "She should have been told the truth from the beginning. Why should she be ashamed? Child of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. She should be proud. We are all taught to be proud of our race from childhood. I was. You were. Yet you have made her despise her People."

Again like the cousins.

"Why do you not marry her? She is twenty-one. In Syria she would now be the mother of three or four lovely children, if the Lord were gracious. It is never well that a girl should remain unmarried. They get fancies in their heads. Demons whisper things and drive them mad. Already the girl tells me she will not marry because she will be free. It is foolishness for a woman to say she will remain free."

"She must please herself."

"There is that young Englishman. He loves her. Why not let him marry her?"

"Francesca must please herself. Melkah, is all my life foolishness? Did I send away my husband in foolishness?"

"It is foolishness," Melkah repeated, "for a woman to say 'I will be the master,' because she is a woman, and therefore the servant of her husband. This is the Law. We cannot escape the Law."

"Oh! the Law—the Law! I thought I had heard enough of the Law."

She sat in silence again for a while. "If Francesca marries," she went on, "should I have to declare her parentage? If I make settlements upon her, must I declare the truth? If she takes upon her, as she thinks of doing, the public life, and advocates emancipation in public, must the truth be known? Sup-

pose she was successful? Suppose the papers got hold of the Moorish story? Then we should have a contradiction from somebody who remembers Emanuel and knows the circumstances of his marriage. It will be stated in what synagogue we were married. Oh! it would be maddening!"

"Why," said Melkah; "you are not alone in the world. You have cousins—you must have cousins. Every Jew has cousins, and they all know. Emanuel Elveda had cousins, I suppose, and they all know; and the more you are talked about with your riches and your beautiful daughter, the more will they talk, and we cannot cut off our relations. They are born with us and remain with us all our days."

"What shall I do, Melkah? Oh! what shall I do?"

"Tell her the truth; go back to the People; take the foolishness out of her head, and marry her quickly."

"I cannot do any of these things."

"You must. Tell her the truth, or there will be mischief. Let her go back to the People, or there will be mischief. Marry her quickly, or there will be more mischief."

CHAPTER X

FORBIDDEN LOVE

THERE is a certain street in a certain suburb—every great town's suburb begins where all the houses have gardens. This is a street inhabited by foremen of works, heads of departments in the smaller factories, clerks, national school-masters, and the like—a street of quite the better sort. The houses, which are all alike, contain a room in the basement and a kitchen, two rooms on the ground-floor, two on the first floor, and a garret. All the houses in the street show the same ornamentation in lines of colored bricks. At the back of the houses on the west side stretches a large open space. None of the residents, I believe, have ever objected to this open space that it is a place of tombs; on the contrary, they congratulate themselves on the fine freedom of air obtained by the breadth and length of the cemetery—it is half a mile long and a quarter of a mile broad—none of the residents, who are people of common-sense, ever give a thought to the multitudinous dead who lie buried there. As for being afraid of their ghosts, who ever heard of a ghost in a new-fashioned cemetery? The sighs which reach the ears of the sleepless at night are recognized as the rustling of the poplars, not the plaint of the dead; there comes from it at sunset no awfulness of the tomb; yonder white form rising above the headstones at twilight is not a spectre, and nobody takes it for a spectre; it is but a broken pillar, a tasty and appropriate thing commemorating the name and life of a respected citizen prematurely cut off at eighty-one.

The houses in this street are clean and well kept; the blinds are half-down—this fact alone proves the respectability of the tenants; the door-steps are whitened once a week—for Sunday morning; for the same occasion knocker and door-handle are polished.

In the daytime the street is left entirely empty, except for the

costers. For obvious reasons there is little social intercourse among housewives in the morning; at twelve o'clock the children bring back life to the streets by coming home for dinner; towards four in the afternoon there begins movement, windows are thrown up, doors are opened, ladies who have got on their "things" come out and converse with each other.

This evening, about seven, a young lady, dressed daintily, if not richly, was set down at the end of the street by the tram. She knew her way and tripped along the pavement quickly, without looking about her.

Half-way down the street, on the side where the backs overlook the cemetery, she stopped at one which bore a brass plate, on which was engraved the legend, "Miss Bernard, Teacher of Music." And in the window was posted a card announcing that the terms were a shilling an hour, and that instruction was imparted either on the piano, the concertina, or the banjo, on these very reasonable terms.

"Why! Good gracious! If it isn't Clara!"

The Professor of Music was at the moment composing—not a sonata, but a harmony in gray stuff for a best walking-dress. She took the pins out of her mouth before this ejaculation, dropped the stuff, and jumped into the arms of her visitor. "It's Clara!" she repeated. "Three months and more since you've been to see me!"

"Six months and more since you've been to see me, Cousin Nell, if you come to that."

"Well, but you've got nothing to do—not even your dress to make, nor your hat to trim. And see what I've got to do! Pupils all day, off and on. The dinner to order—perhaps father may look in—no one ever knows when he may arrive; the house to look after—the girls get more slovenly every day; and all my things to make for myself if I want to look nice."

"You always do look nice, Nell."

So she did; a girl much after the style of her cousin, but smaller, a bright and capable girl, good-tempered but sharp-tempered, resolute, quick of speech and of manner, a girl who did things quickly; fair of complexion, like her cousin.

"Whatever you put on, Nell," repeated her cousin, "you always look neat and nice. It's been too bad of me to stay away

so long, but I've been a good deal occupied painting, and all kinds of things."

"Society claims young ladies," Nell laughed. "Oh! I know all about the grand people. Madame Elveda's private theatricals are in the penny Society papers: 'Miss Clara Angelo made a charming Esther.' Father saw it and cut it out for me. Well, why shouldn't you go into the best society there is? You've got the money; you've got the finest education in the world; you've got the beauty; you've got the manners. You'll marry a lord—see if you don't! Your father wouldn't mind much if you did."

Clara took off her hat. "Father's gone to a dinner. I've come to have supper and a long talk. Let me help you with your dress, Nell."

"You shall have supper and welcome. Only, Clara, I don't know how you'll like it. There's my lodger."

"A lodger! Here? Why, Nell, what do you want with lodgers?"

"I don't know. Give me one more lodger, and I shall begin to be a widow who's known better days. Father took it into his head that we want to let lodgings. Came here—told me to get ready his room for a lodger. So we've got a lodger. First I thought he must be some friend of father's down on his luck, and wanting whiskey-and-soda all day long, with the *Sportsman* to read. But nothing of the kind, my dear. I don't believe he knows the head of a horse from his tail, or the taste of a Scotch and a split. He's just a soft-spoken man who works at wood-carving, and walks up and down the garden, with his hands behind him, thinking."

"A working-man? And lodging here?"

"Yes. You know what father is. You mustn't ask about anything. You've just got to do it. Of course, there's some reason behind. Father doesn't send a strange man into the house at five shillings a week for his room—we can do without his five shillings—and fifteen shillings a week for his board—beer and washing extra—without some reason. There's something behind. Shall you mind sitting down to table with a wood-carver by trade? I'm quite ashamed, but you see how it is. And really he is a superior kind of man."

Clara laughed. "You won't put it into a penny Society paper, will you, Nell? I don't mind if you don't. Well, but it's very odd of your father. What's the man's name?"

"He calls himself Ellis, but his name, of course, is something else. Emanuel Ellis he calls himself, but I call him—we're very good friends already—I call him Emanuel. He calls everybody by the first name. You see he is some sort of a gentleman—I don't know what. He's not a common working-man, anyhow."

"Wood-carving is one of the Fine Arts. He is an artist. Perhaps he is a Nihilist or something, though why your father should take in a Nihilist I don't know."

"Come into my room and lay down your things." Her own room up-stairs overlooked the garden. Nell lifted the gauze blind. "There he is, Clara. He takes his bench and he works there; when he isn't working he walks about thinking. Real working-men, mind, don't think—they read the paper. Sometimes he leans over the wall and looks at the tombs; real working-men never look at tombs, they talk in the bar." The lodger, in fact, was walking up and down the narrow strip of garden, his hands behind his back, his head hanging.

"He works for Mortimer Street," Nell went on. "So your father knows him, Clara, as well as mine. He will walk like that for hours; sometimes he will make notes in a pocket-book. He's no common wood-carver."

Just then the lodger lifted his head.

"Why," cried Clara, "I seem to know him! Where have I seen that face before?"

"At meals," said Nell, "he talks like a book. He's been everywhere travelling."

"What does he travel in?" Clara sometimes betrayed, or did not attempt to conceal, her knowledge of commercial methods.

"Nothing. He isn't a business man."

"I'm sure I've seen a face like his. Oh! I know. It is like the face of Francesca's father, that she keeps in her own room with white flowers always round it. I believe she says prayers before it when nobody is looking. Oh! it is the type of the Spanish Jew—our type. You can tell it anywhere. Nelly, I sometimes think that we *can't* be of the same race as those poor creatures with pasty cheeks and hollow chests that you see in Whitechapel. We *must* be descended from Joshua's captains. These poor creatures are the Gibeonites."

Nell dropped the curtain, and they went down-stairs again.

There was something more than the lodger to talk about; nor

had Clara come for nothing but a simple call and a supper. The girls began by making talk—to keep off the inevitable. Clara asked about business; Nell talked about her pupils and their ambitions, which mostly pointed to the boards of the music-hall. Then that dropped, and then Clara plunged into the real business of the day.

"You've got something more to tell me, Nell. What was it you meant?"

Nell picked up her work and bent over it to hide her burning cheeks. "Clara," she said, "what am I to do? He won't take No for an answer."

"But, Nell, what do you mean? The thing's quite—quite impossible."

"How can it be impossible? It is done over and over again."

"But you can't do it—you must not think of it. Why—it's madness! Do you know what it means? To give up your religion and your People and all?"

"I tell him so. He says that if I really and truly loved him I should be ready to give up everything and follow him."

"But, Nell, you surely don't mean that you love him—love him—love a Christian?"

Nell bent her head lower.

"You must give him up, Nell," Clara said, eagerly. "You must. Do you hear? You must!"

Nell made no reply.

"Oh! my dear—think—never to see any of your own People again—not me—nor my father—nor your own father—nor our cousins! To go right away from all the people's traditions and our inheritance, and the promises—to join the Gentiles who have persecuted us for ages—and would still persecute us if they dared, but we are too rich and strong for them—to take up with the religion which we have always despised, even at our lowest and worst—Nell—you must not—you must not!"

Nell still made no reply. Clara caught her hands. "Nell, dear," she said, "you will promise to think no more about this nonsense—won't you? You must promise. It would break your father's heart. Oh! Such a disgrace to the family! What does he know about it?"

"Nothing. I am afraid to tell him," the girl whispered.

"Afraid to tell him? What is there, then, to tell? Oh, Nell —you haven't! . . . Oh! you haven't!"

Nell threw off her cousin's hands and sprang to her feet. "I have, then! I've promised. Oh, Clara! it's all very well for you. Your father is rich; you live in a great house and have carriages and servants and everything; you will have plenty of money all your life; you can choose the best; you are pretty—"

"I am not so pretty as you, Nell."

"You are. And dressed ten times as well. If there is any young man of the People that any girl might like to marry, you can have him. What about me? I sit here alone all day! No friends ask me out! There's nobody to talk to except my pupils! When father is at home he sits in his room all the time adding up figures—he never talks to me even at meals. Sometimes he says, 'How's business, Nell?' Sometimes he says, 'Do this, Nell. Do this or that.' Nothing but orders. I never go anywhere—I've got no nice friends. There is no Society for me. If I am to marry, what choice is there? Come with me to Wentworth Street and talk to those cousins of ours. Would you like to marry—actually to marry—one of them? No, Clara, not even your religion would persuade you to do that."

"Which does not mean that you are to take a Christian, Nell."

"What am I to do, then?"

"If we can't find among our own People a husband worth such a wife as you, Nell, you must go without. And who wants you to marry one of our poor cousins? Not your father, Nell, I'm sure."

"And it is all talk of money—money—money, Clara! How can you bear to listen to the talk about money—money—money? Anthony hates money — he's above such considerations — he scorns it."

"Nell, you ought to be wiser than to talk like that. Of course it's money. What have our People got to do? We've got to make ourselves strong, respected, feared. We must be feared before we are respected. There must be no more chance of persecution—no more lower position. How can we become strong? We may produce great men of intellect and science—great artists, great musicians; but that isn't enough, because even among Us a very great intellect only shows now and then. Besides, science and art and philosophy don't make money, so they are scorned. We

must make money if we want to become powerful. At their own game—I mean the business of money-making—which occupies ninety-nine Christians out of a hundred, we must beat them. And we do beat them. Yes, we do beat them. And they know it. They would persecute us again if they could, because our cleverness frightens them—it humiliates them. Nell, don't talk nonsense about the money-making. Leave that to those who pretend to despise what they cannot get; leave it to your fine Christian lover, if you dare to acknowledge that you have one." The girl spoke with the vehemence of one who had to defend the pursuit of money if she would retain her self-respect.

"Well, then, Clara, I have got a lover, and he is a Christian—that is to say, he doesn't care what religion I belong to, so as he is free. So there! What is going to happen, how it will end, I don't know. I think he will have his own way, he is so masterful. And he won't take No for an answer, and what am I to do? And it is terribly dull all alone here."

"Not taking No and being married, Nell, are two different things—wait till your father hears about it."

"You won't tell him, Clara?" she cried, eagerly. "You won't interfere? If you do, I will run away. This very day, I will."

"No; I won't say a word if you will never let anybody know that I was in the secret. But Nell—Nell—oh! it is dreadful to think of."

"Wait till you see him and hear him talk; then you will understand. As for our People, oh, Clara, it is all very well when you live with the rich, but if you lived nearer the other end you would not be so grand with your glorious past and your glorious future. Wait till you see my Anthony."

"What is he, Nell—a clerk?"

"Oh no! much better than that. He is in a chemical works—science is his line. You can smell the works a mile off when the wind blows the right way. And he's musical as well—I taught him the banjo. That's how it began. When you sit together, you know, with nothing but the instrument between, and your eyes meeting and your fingers touching—he's got a light and rather pretty handling of the instrument, though he won't practise, and a nice voice. Sometimes he says he shall give up science and go in for Art, meaning the music-hall boards. And then, besides, he's just tremendous when he gets upon

tyrants and the House of Lords. Sometimes he says he shall give up everything in order to get the people their rights. He's a beautiful talker, and handsome, Clara. . . . Oh!"

"A Radical!" There was scorn in the expression. "As for me, I am on the side where law and order make it possible for people to make money. Suppose the Socialists were to get in, where would our money be?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I've got no money. Not that Anthony is a Socialist. He's coming this evening, Clara, to supper—that is why I wanted you to come to-night. And—and—if there are one or two things said that you don't approve, you won't say anything, will you?"

"I'll have no hand in it, mind."

"You sha'n't. He's just a gentleman friend dropping in to supper. Any gentleman might do that, I suppose?"

"I suppose so," Clara replied, with a ghost of a smile. But she looked ill at ease.

"What are his people, Nell?"

"His father runs a little newspaper, but I don't see how he can make it pay. He's a curious man, rather like a gentleman; a soft-spoken man with far-off eyes. I believe he has been to sea. He talks pretty. He wants everybody to see what is right and then to do it. That's his father. His mother—well, you know, I suppose, we've all of us got some trouble with our relations; they were invented so as we shouldn't be too happy—think of our own cousins in that little shop!—Anthony's mother is a kind of troublesome relation. She drinks awful—oh, it's a terrible thing! Anthony can't live at home—only goes to see his father now and then at his office. Hush! here he comes."

Mr. Anthony Hayling presented the appearance of one who ought to have been a gentleman but had somehow, at some critical moment, taken a wrong turning. His features were very nearly handsome, his stature was tall, his figure good, his carriage upright. His eyes, however, were too bright and restless, his lips too thin, his head too small, his profile too sketchy, and his taste in dress too imitative, at a distance, of Piccadilly. His light hair curled all over his head, and his upper lip was adorned with a fringe very carefully groomed. In his button-hole, of course, he carried a white flower.

He arrived just before supper-time, and at once entered upon

an easy and graceful conversation about himself and his own greatness. We are too apt to consider that personal pride should be based upon something that the world respects—rank, wealth, intellect. Here, however, was a small employé in certain chemical works with all the vanity of a full-blown peacock. Clara listened with dislike and contempt. It would be difficult, she thought, to find among her own People a young man so shallow and so vain. Poor Nell!

Presently supper was laid, the two girls lending a hand. Then the lodger appeared.

"Emanuel," said Nell, "this is my cousin Clara, and this is my friend Anthony."

The lodger bowed—not at all like a working-man, Clara observed. She also observed that he went through the ceremony of a grace before meat. Then he took his seat, and sat in silence, listening to the facile flow of the young man with interest, as if he was considering a specimen.

Anthony took no notice of him. Such young men have small respect for gray hairs; they are an outward sign, not of wisdom, but of being "used up"—which proves that physical strength is still the thing most regarded in some circles. Emanuel, to Anthony Hayling, was only an old man. Old age begins earlier on some social levels than on others. Among the younger working-men a man is considered middle-aged at thirty, old at forty, wellnigh past work at fifty, and senile at sixty. At seventy he is disgracefully trespassing beyond the limits allowed to life.

Emanuel, then, sat in silence. Clara, watching him, observed that his manners at table were very far beyond what one expects of an ordinary working-man. She set him down for some person under a cloud, the nature of which was known to her uncle and her father; and that for some reason or other it was best for him to be in seclusion for a while. Then she returned to the study of this illegal lover; and she observed, to her disquiet, an illustration in fact of the abominable French proverb, "Il y a toujours un qui aime et l'autre qui est aimé." In this case it was the young man who received, tolerated, and even encouraged the passion of the girl. Poor Nell showed her devotion in a hundred ways: it caused her lover's glass of beer to overflow; it covered his fruit tart with sugar; it emphasized his talk with eyes of admiration and murmurous words of assent. One has observed similar

symptoms in maidens of still loftier station. Anthony received these attentions with a kind of superior condescension. They were due to him, in his own opinion, as to the superior animal, by the girl who was engaged to him.

"I'm a man of Science, Miss Angelo." Anthony recalled her attention by addressing her personally; his talk had been of that copious, facile, commonplace, day-before-yesterday wisdom to which one gladly closes the ear of attention. "I am a man of Science, I've passed examinations. And I am a man of Art, too. I will play and sing to you presently, if you like. And I'm a Social Reformer, too."

"Three rolled into one!" cried the admiring Nell. "Think of that, Clara!"

"It's unusual," the young man continued, modestly and awkwardly, "because one doesn't know which line to take up for choice. It's this way, as Nell knows. If I stick to the works—where I am already indispensable—'What we should do without Hayling,' the Manager said only this morning, 'I don't know'—that's what he said, Nell."

"He knows a good man when he's got one," the girl replied.

"Well—if I stay there, some day I shall become manager—a thousand a year—that's all—only a thousand a year. But what's money compared with position? I never allow money to decide anything. Suppose I go on the Music-hall boards—why, worse singers and players than me make their fifty pounds a week—of course it's hard work, I know, and the public is uncertain—but still—fifty pounds a week! Then, again, it isn't the money, but the position! No one in the world cares for money less than me. Well—but suppose I jack up both and go into the House—you should have heard my speech last March at the Parliament—there's certain glory waiting for me to pick it up—only one has got to live."

"Anthony is the one to lead the people," said Nell. "No one like him for that."

"Not since Charley Bradlaugh went under," Anthony replied, modestly. "You come some night, Miss Angelo, and hear me speak."

"Are you a Socialist, Mr. Hayling?"

"Socialist? Not exactly," he answered. "Socialist? That means everybody getting the same pay—the skulk and the sneak

and the blackleg, with the worker. Not good enough for me. I want every man to have what he earns—all he earns. What he makes is his—for himself—no Socialist rot for me; no working for other people; not to share a penny with the skulks; not to give a penny to make any lazy middleman rich; and not to pay taxes to keep any class in idleness."

"Are you going to take their money from the poor people who are rich, then?"

"Not in the way you think; I am only going to make their money of no use to them, that's all. Strikes you as original, that idea, doesn't it? I don't give it away to everybody, you know. If we choose to say that there shall be no more rich people there will be no more, and that in less time than you can understand."

"How will you do that, Mr. Hayling?"

"Quite easily," he replied, in his light and airy way. "We shall just stop paying any interest; no more dividends. We shall take over the gas, the water, the trains, trams, and omnibuses; we shall make interest illegal. What more do you want?"

Clara laughed. "You will find it very easy indeed."

"As soon as I begin you shall see the splinters fly. First, I shall make myself what my father wanted to be but couldn't—a leader of the people. If preaching would settle the labor question, Dad would have settled it long ago. But there! perhaps, after all, I shall stay at the works."

"Don't," said Nell. "Go into the House and be Prime-minister."

"Perhaps—perhaps. All I can say is that the last time I talked with—well—before strangers"—he nodded very politely in the direction of Emanuel—"I can't tell you his name, but you'd be surprised if you knew who he was. 'Young man,' he said, 'you are the sort we want in the House. If I'd fifty with me like you'— but I mustn't repeat all he said. A Cabinet Minister draws five thousand. Hang the money! Think of the position!"

"His father," said Nell, admiringly, "is proprietor, I told you, of a Labor Organ. His name is Anthony Hayling, too." Emanuel started. "He is a very clever man, which explains"—she nodded sideways, indicating the intellect of the son.

Emanuel looked up, suddenly taking an interest in the conversation.

"Your name," he said, "is Anthony Hayling, is it? Eighteen years ago I knew one Anthony Hayling. He was then an officer on a sailing-ship in which I took a voyage from Malaga to Alexandria. Your face as well as your name reminds me of him."

"Yes," Anthony answered, carelessly. "Father was a sailor for a long time. He gave it up about a dozen years ago, and came here to muddle away his money on his Labor Organ, which working-men won't read. I dare say he was your friend. If you want to see him you can find him at his office." The appearance of the stranger, with his gentle look and soft voice, did not attract him. "What was I saying?" he went on. "Oh yes! If I were to go in for politics I should lecture and organize."

"On what subjects would you lecture, young man?" asked Emanuel.

"Social economy. I don't suppose," Anthony added, with consideration, "that you know what it means."

"Perhaps not. What would you organize, young man?"

"Strikes, old man, strikes. There have been strikes already, but skittles and beer compared to what I shall arrange. Wealth isn't silver and gold—it's shares. Strikes! Keep on striking. Ruin the shares. Destroy the dividends. That's the way to destroy Capital—which is investments."

"I have heard of that way. It has been tried for thirty years and more. Capital has been injured, perhaps, but more has been created. Capital goes on growing while there is peace. It will go on growing, if not here, then elsewhere. I could show you, perhaps, a better way than that."

"Oh!"—the future gladiator of the platform was aroused by this opposition. He changed color, and his bright eyes flashed dangerously. "You know a better plan, do you? *You* know a better way—*you!* And who are you, and how did you get at your better way? You're not an Englishman, to begin with—you're a foreigner. Well, bring out your better plan."

"In good time—in my own good time, young man."

"Well, then, listen to this, and then take a back seat, and hope that nobody will see you. When there is no more dividend there is no more capital. Shares that produce nothing can't be sold. When there's nothing to sell, the workman takes over the plant and runs the show for himself—now then!"

"There is a better way." Emanuel rose from the table—supper

was finished. "Perhaps, young man"—he spoke as one having authority—"for the sake of your father, if he proves to be my old and esteemed friend, and after consultation with him, and if you are worthy to be his son, I may impart to you that better way." He bowed to the girls and retired.

"Worthy?" Anthony Hayling rubbed his forehead with bewilderment. The thing was incredible. "Me—worthy? Me—the son of my father? Who is he, anyhow, Nell? What does he know? What does he mean?"

"He's father's lodger, Mr. Emanuel Ellis. That's all I know. Don't mind him, Anthony."

"Well, Nell, you'd better advise him—he don't know our ways—if he doesn't want a rough-and-tumble, to keep a civil tongue in his head. Old as he is, I've seen older men knocked off a platform before now. Me—worthy? Well, never mind. What's coming is this, Miss Angelo. Nell knows. It isn't what you expect. It isn't Socialism. That means the capable working for the incapable. We're not going to stand any such rot as that. Ours is to be the reign of the working-man; everything is to belong to the man who made it; everything is to be sold in national stores for the man who made it. No living on the work and brains of others, no idle men; as for getting rich, every man will get as rich as he can by means of his own labor, but he won't be able to buy the labor of anybody else, nor the land, nor will he be able to get interest for his money, and there will be pensions for everybody."

"Isn't it wonderful, Clara?" cried Nell. "He works it all out like a pattern."

"I think, Mr. Hayling, that you have hardly considered the difficulties."

"That is what they all say. The old difficulty is the combination of the men. And there was never a better chance of Universal Combination than to-day. Well, but as I was saying, perhaps I shall stay at the works after all—and perhaps I shall go on the boards."

"Now take the banjo, Anthony, and show Clara how beautifully you can sing and play."

The style of the singing was like that of his social philosophy, imitated and borrowed. He handled his banjo with apparent ease, which disguised his very limited mastery of the instrument,

and his voice, musical but thin, had caught something of the touch and go which some music-hall artists affect.

"When I sang that song," he said, after his third and last performance, "to the Manager of the Olympian, he just slapped me on the shoulder. 'My boy,' he says, 'at our little shop alone there's ten pound a week waiting for you to pick up.'"

"Ten pound a week!" echoed Nell, with a triumphant glance at her cousin. "Fancy that! Ten pound a week!"

At half-past ten Clara walked down the street with this young leader of the future. He was interesting. He was so confident, so ready for fighting, that she almost felt as if the battle was already lost to her friends—the weakest Cause looks strong when there appears a man in battle array as its Champion, even though a whole army be drawn out against him; it was not Goliath only whom David defeated, but the multitude of the Philistines behind him.

In the course of a single hour this young man had destroyed every institution in the country; he had pulled everything down and rebuilt it upon his own style of architecture. It was as if on the side of Westminster Abbey were erected houses of small streets after the fashion of the Hinterland of Mile-End Road—houses for the honest, intelligent, earnest working-man. And so on, and so on. We know the kind of talk. It may be inspired by a noble generosity; it may be founded on imitation and vanity. It is, however, the most remarkable sign of the times that everywhere, on every level, every young man is now engaged more or less in considering the questions of social conservation or social revolution. To most of these young men comes the vision of a new world. Even to this shallow young pretender, who stole his ideas and his phrases, there may have been some kind of dream. He knew nothing, but he had, perhaps—an inheritance from his father—a glimmering of a desire for justice. Dreams of the hardness of men's hearts, of their selfishness, of their dishonesty, never have a chance of a hearing. But only to dream impossible things prevents mankind from sinking back into the ancient hopelessness. And the more these things are preached, the wider these ideas are spread, the more difficult becomes the position of the sweater and the grinder. Because, you see, the world is growing gradually to despise the sweater, and nobody likes to be despised. Therefore let us encourage the dreamers, even the shallow-brain who steals his dreams.

Clara walked beside the young man in silence. At the end of the street she stopped. "I take a tram here," she said. "One word, Mr. Hayling. You know that I am Nell's cousin. She has told me something to-day which pains me inexpressibly."

"What's that?"

"That you and she are engaged."

"Well? Why should that pain you?"

"Because it is forbidden by our religion. We marry only with our own People. If Nell leaves her home to marry you, she will have to give up her religion, her father, her relations, her own People—everything. She will come to you without a single friend to wish her happiness or to stand by her in trouble."

"Well, Miss Angelo," said the young man, airily, "when she comes to me I will give her another religion—she can take whatever she pleases, for all I care. I will be her father, her relations, her People—everything. If that's all, good-night."

He nodded his head without raising his hat, laughed, and turned away.

CHAPTER XI

THE "FRIEND OF LABOR"

THE office of the *Friend of Labor*—Editor and Proprietor, Mr. Anthony Hayling—consists of an outer and an inner room, the ground-floor of a little old house wedged in between two big modern ones. The house is so old that it has the projecting wooden windows and gable of three hundred years ago. Its floors are uneven. It would have fallen long ago but for the friendly support of its neighbors. It might be a beautiful house but for its shabby condition and the want of new paint, which make it retreat between its younger neighbors as far as it can. The windows, however, are bright, because the tenant, the above-named Editor and Proprietor, cleans them with his own hands once every week from top to bottom. For the same reason—namely, that the tenant himself scrubs the floors—the house within is clean.

The paper is sold in the front office to the few who buy it. The boy who dispenses it and watches over the till finds the work all too light for his energies. In the room at the back sits, all day long, the Editor. Here he writes the paper; here he cuts out the extracts which mostly fill its eight columns; here he passes the proofs; here he spends the greater part of the day. The two tables are littered with papers — English, American, French, German, and Italian. The paper contains nothing but articles and news belonging to the world of labor; there is always a leading article by the Editor. I believe it makes rather heavy reading; but if anybody knew of this paper, and could make a complete collection of the numbers from the beginning, he would possess a most precious record of all that has been attempted, taught, done, and — in condensed form — said on the labor question for the last ten or twelve years; for it is now about that time since the *Friend of Labor* began its career.

This afternoon the Editor sat, as usual, in his back office. He had turned his chair to the fire and put his feet on the fender,

gazing into the empty fireplace. On the table, among the piles of papers, lay the editorial tools—the paste and the scissors, the writing-pad and the pen, and the tobacco-box. In the editor's right hand was a long pipe, charged ready for the inspiring touch of flame. But he did not light that pipe; he sat with meditative head; he was dejected; he beat a tattoo upon the arm of his chair with his left hand.

He was a man between fifty and sixty; the lines of his face were fine, though age and perhaps trouble had robbed him of his old comeliness and brought up the bones and corrugated the forehead. His eyes were deep and clear, set beneath a perplexed and shaggy brow; he looked, as he was, a kindly creature, kindly and thoughtful. This twofold quality permits itself to be read in the face of every man who possesses it. His hair was an iron gray; and his beard, which grew behind, not upon, his chin, was white; his hand showed more knuckle than is common among penmen; it looked like a hand which had done rough work. He wore an old blue jacket, a comfortable old jacket convenient for work. He had no waistcoat, and an old leather belt served him instead of braces. His necktie was a running knot, the ends lying loose ready to fly free, after the fashion of the old portraits. He had been a sailor, this Editor; it was more than a dozen years since he had changed his profession, but he looked a sailor still.

Outside—it was the less desirable side of the main thoroughfare—the stream of life passed along the broad pavement, always a double current up and down. People stopped to look in the shop windows as they passed, but no one cared to look at the windows of this office, though a copy of the paper was pasted on the glass within for all who chose to read. Nobody turned into the office to buy a copy; the current number lay piled on the counter; the boy behind the counter sat in his place upon the office-stool, and, with his head reclined on the paper, was fast asleep. The office cat basked and purred in the sunshine of the office window, the blue-bottles which belonged to the fried-sausage shop three doors off, and had got to this place by mistake, buzzed about the windows. The place had a peaceful and a retired aspect. A business man would have found the show of trade somewhat slack; a poet would have murmured that here indeed it was always afternoon.

"Boy!" cried the Editor.

The boy made no response. The Editor slowly rose and opened the door.

"Ahoy, there—boy!" he cried.

The boy lifted his head and looked up, sleepily.

"Bring me your book."

The boy picked up the volume in which, one by one, he entered his sales, and took it into the Editor's room.

"If this barky, my lad, could afford a bo's'n, which it can't, I'd spend a penny on a rope's-end to keep you awake. Hand over. Now then. How many copies did you sell last week?"

"A hundred and twenty-one."

"Ten and a penny. And your wages are seven and six, and the rent of this old shanty is forty pounds a year, and the cost of printing the thing comes to two pound ten a week. If we reckon the keep of the old woman and me there's another thirty-five shillings a week. Now, my confidential clerk, tell me what is the profit per week to the proprietor of this valuable paper?"

The confidential clerk grinned.

"And you're too proud to scrub the office?"

"I'm a clerk; I'm not a railway porter."

"Well, I can scrub it for myself. Go back to your seat and resume your penn'orth of 'Juniper Jack.' I looked at it this morning. The author, my lad, talks about ships and ships' gear when he has never been to sea. But you don't care, I suppose."

The boy retired. The Editor sat down again and considered the returns—"A hundred and twenty-one last week, a hundred and twenty the week before—we are going up—but a hundred and twenty-eight the week before that—Humph! And not a sign from anywhere that any one reads or regards the *Friend of Labor*."

So he relapsed into meditation, first lighting his pipe. In the front office, because the afternoon was drowsy, and the boy had eaten a sixpenny beefsteak-pudding for dinner, he fell asleep again, his head upon the counter.

Presently there came along a man who stopped, read the weekly bill stuck on the door-post, and then opened the door and looked in. He saw a boy asleep. As the boy did not wake up, the visitor laid his hand gently on the reclining head. The boy started, jumped up, and mechanically handed a copy of the paper.

"Thank you—no—I will perhaps take a copy of the paper presently." He spoke with a slight foreign accent. "I want to see Mr. Anthony Hayling—the Editor. Can I see him?"

The boy pointed to the door of the inner office, and then, as the visitor turned in that direction, he laid his head down and fell instantly asleep again. At the opening of the door the Editor sat up and looked round sharply. Visitors were rare at the office of the *Friend of Labor*. This visitor stood just within the open door holding the handle. The two men looked at one another curiously.

"I should know your face," said the Editor. "I do know it. But I forget where I saw it last. I can't for the moment connect your face with anything."

"You are gray, Anthony," the visitor replied. "When I saw you last—about eighteen years ago—you were brown. Your shoulders are round; when last we parted they were square. That was at Alexandria. You took me on board at Malaga, and you put me on shore at Alexandria. Do you remember now?"

"Let me look at you, man. Come to the light—so. I remember your face and I remember your voice. Man alive!" he cried, holding out his hand, "you are Emanuel—Emanuel—Emanuel Elveda. Remember you? Remember Emanuel? Shake hands, man, shake hands! I never thought to set eyes on you again. You came out of the darkness—you went back to it. All my other voyages are dreams, but that one—why, man, it lives in my memory—I remember every day of it. Do you remember the nights when you came on deck and beguiled my watch with talk? Heavens! when you were gone I understood that prophets are sometimes entertained unawares. Sit down, man. Sit down opposite—turn out the papers. So! Sit there and let me look at you."

Emanuel obeyed. "I too remember, Anthony. You are well, my friend, and happy?"

Just then a loud and strident feminine voice was heard singing, out of tune, an ancient ditty once popular—an old music-hall song debased from a lovely German air. After a line or two the singer smashed something violently—something made of glass. Then she laughed loud and long. "Anthony!" she cried, "Anthony, you old Methodist! Anthony, you canting old hypocrite, come up here and I'll smash every bone in your body like I've smashed

this bottle! Come up, I say, come up! You're afraid to come! Yah! you're a coward! Call yourself a man? Come up, I say!"

Sounds followed as of a heavy body lurching and stumbling round a room, upsetting chairs and knocking over light articles, then a final bump as of a heavy body falling to the ground. The house shook. Silence followed. Mr. Hayling pointed upward with his pipe. "Allow me," he said, gravely smiling, "to answer your question by an illustration. You hear that gentle voice—that caressing, fondling voice? It is the voice of my wife. You now understand that I am perfectly happy. Shall I present you to my wife? She goes through three stages every day. For the sake of variety she sometimes rings these changes in the morning; sometimes in the afternoon; sometimes in the evening. But always every day. First, she gets drunk—uproariously drunk; at this stage she sings and laughs and is full of friendship for all the world; she then becomes, suddenly, quarrelsome drunk—quarrelsome—sometimes she puts her head out of window at this stage and makes the street ring with her threats and her accusations. Thirdly, she falls fast asleep, and so continues for ten or twelve hours. You see that here are the first conditions of a happy household."

"Can you do nothing?"

"Nothing. The case is hopeless. Well, I desired at the outset to share the Common Lot—nothing better—and I've got it. One must not complain. Many honest fellows besides me, many better men, have got drunken wives."

"But they do not choose their wives because they drink."

"They don't drink, you see, at first. My girl was as innocent of the drink craving as any one in the world. She was a factory hand. She couldn't sew, she couldn't cook, she could do nothing. She could hardly read when I married her, but she was no drinker of strong drink. No one knows how ignorant any human creature can be until he marries a factory hand. Then, you see, no one knows what may happen if you go away and leave such a woman to her own devices. If she is at work all day she is out of mischief. When she is left alone with nothing to think about—well—" He got up and plunged his hands in his pockets—"I am quite sure, Emanuel, that there is not one single man or woman in the whole world who is strong enough to be left without some controlling influence. We cannot stand alone. As for this poor

woman—who shall blame her? She was left alone. What is there to do but to go on—and to forgive—to forgive? After all, it is the Common Lot."

He sat down again. "But about yourself, Emanuel—explain your appearance. How did you find me out? Whence come you?"

"First, I come from wandering up and down the face of the earth. Next, I have not forgotten you. Your head was full of thoughts twenty years ago."

"Aye! I was younger then. The wife was sober; I had a boy to think of."

"Your boy—I met him on Saturday evening—at the house where I am lodging. That is how I found you out. But, Anthony, he is not like his father."

"No—I hope no more of him—I accept. Again, it is the Common Lot, Emanuel, to hope for the impossible and to accept the inevitable. What, indeed, is one to do unless one does accept? There are now many thousands of lads about—it is the most remarkable sign of the times—who spend their evenings laboriously, resolved to rise. But he belongs to those—they are numbered by tens of thousands—who live for the daily pleasure. My son is a shallow-brain and full of vanity. But, again—it is the Common Lot."

"You are a great English lord, rich and of great position; you left everything to become a common sailor at first, before the mast. You lived upon your wages. It was wonderful. Well, you married in that class. Your son belongs, then, either to the working people or the noble people. But he has the appearance of a little clerk."

"Yes, I was weak. I suffered him to go his own way. He is now a clerk at a certain chemical works. He calls himself, I believe, a gentleman. He goes to a local Parliament and talks froth and foolishness."

"But he will be your successor and your heir. Does he know it?"

Mr. Hayling laid his hand upon his friend's arm. "Emanuel," he said, "you are the only person in the world who knows my secret. Keep it. For God's sake keep that secret! Good heavens! if they knew it! If that poor besotted creature lying on the floor up-stairs knew it! If that boy knew it! Think of my

wife as the Countess of Hayling! Think of that boy as Lord Selsey, the heir to that big estate. No; if I can help it he shall never know it. He shall never know the profligate life that he would so ardently rush upon if he could. As for the House of Lords, it has survived a good deal, but I doubt if it could survive my son Anthony. Keep my secret, Emanuel."

"It is forgotten. I remember it no more."

There was silence for a space.

"We had great talks on that voyage," Mr. Hayling continued; "great talks on great things. You were the only man who ever encouraged and strengthened me. Why, I confessed to you as women confess to their priest. Man! you are a Priest—you were a prophet. What have you done with your wisdom? Is any of it put into books?"

Emanuel laughed. "No; such as it is I have given it here and there—giving and taking—with such as yourself."

"And nothing written?"

"Why should I write anything? There is knowledge which cannot be put into books. It is handed down like the Unwritten Law, which Moses, you know, gave first to Aaron, and then to Aaron and Aaron's sons; next to Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the seventy elders; lastly to Aaron, Aaron's sons, the seventy elders; and the whole congregation. That is an allegory which shows how wisdom spreads. If I have any wisdom—which I doubt—this has been its use."

"As for my wisdom, I set it forth every week—that is, I set forth what I find to say—it isn't much—in my little paper. Nobody regards it. Perhaps it isn't worth saying." They relasped into silence. It was exactly as if they were still on the deck of the sailing-ship, slowly ploughing her way under the clear sky of a summer night before a light breeze, silent, with intervals of speech.

"Emanuel," said the Editor, following his own thoughts, "suppose I had the choice again—suppose it was to be done all over again? Even if I knew beforehand that I should have such a wife and such a son, that I should prove such a failure in trying to make myself heard, I would do it all over again, for I have shared in the Common Lot. This was all I asked: the work and the wages of the common man, the hospital when I was sick, the wife and home of the common man, his food and his company, such chil-

dren as he may have. I have had them all. And, upon my word, my friend, the life has been far—far more worth having than the life I left. I would do it—yes, I would do it—all over again."

"That is bravely said."

"As for this paper, who am I that I should set up in the Prophetic line? I ought to have stuck to the sea, but I would be preaching. So I went back to my old lawyers, got a lump of money, and came away. I told them they would never see anything more of me—and they won't. I live and bring out my paper on the interest of the money."

"What have you been telling the people?"

The Editor took up the current number that lay on the table. "I give them all the news that I can find anywhere about work and the conditions of work. As for the preaching. . . . I am ashamed, Emanuel, I am ashamed to think what a little thing it is I have to say."

"What is it?"

"Only the simple things. The copy-book things. The old things of your old Prophets. The very simple copy-book things. What so elementary as the Ten Commandments? Yet—look round you—what is so simple as that one must be honest, that men should combine for other things besides wages, that men should follow righteousness? Yet—consider. That is all I've got to say, Emanuel. And apparently no one listens."

"Yet—go on preaching."

"If we would—or could—only go back to some form of the common life. Have you considered, Emanuel, how many thousands of hearts are longing for the common life again? Well, I preach some kind of common life, where all fare and share alike, and manhood has a chance of developing. That is what I mostly preach. Christianity started with the common life. Let us try to go back to it."

"Judaism led up to it."

"Very likely. Shall we go back to it? Well, here I am, close upon sixty years of age, and all I have learned so far is the simple lesson that the old things are the true things. It is a poor sort of message on which to found a paper, but, my friend, it is the only message that I have."

CHAPTER XII

THY NAME IS EVE

"You are a very wonderful man, Emanuel," said Clara. "You have travelled everywhere; you know everything; you are a scholar; you are a gentleman; and you live by carving in wood."

"Why is it wonderful?" Emanuel had brought his table into the garden, and was sitting over his work in the open air. "What is there so wonderful?"

"You know very well what is wonderful. Wood-carvers are not scholars and gentlemen. Why do you pretend to be a working-man?"

"I do not pretend. This is my livelihood. Since I must work in order to live, I do the work which is to me the easiest, the lightest, and the most pleasant. I can take it up when and where I please; I can find a market in any town; it provides the small amount of money that I want. Why, then, should I not be a working-man?"

Nell was giving a lesson. The scholar was beginning; the scales went up and the scales went down.

Clara waited meantime, and conversed with the philosopher over his wood-carving. In these days she visited her cousin a great deal, impelled by cousinly anxiety over the love-affair which threatened to produce such very serious consequences. Already she was discovering for herself the great truth found out by so many guardians, friends, cousins, and advisers—the helplessness of reason, argument, and common-sense against the power of love. Yet still she persisted; she would save Nell if she could. Whenever, you see, we wish a girl not to marry a man, we say that we are determined to save her if we can. In this case, the young man was not only shallow and vulgar, poor and of small account—in which he was not, perhaps, so very much worse than his mistress—but he was a Christian. Nell must be saved, if possible.

"But," Clara went on, "your earnings are so small; you make so little money by the work. Why not do something better? Why not teach, or lecture, or write?"

"I make all I want. Why should I change the work if I like it? Here, to be sure, I must work harder than I like, because London is an expensive place. How much money do you think I want in the Desert? There I can wander with my friends and cousins the Arabs without the necessity for work at all. I shall get back to the Desert as soon as my present business is despatched."

"You have no books, either. Do you never work at anything else?"

"I want no books. I have read all that I desire to read. Now and then—if I am in a town—I want a laboratory—and I always want a quiet open place, like this Place of Tombs, where one can meditate. Looking across this field of graves one hears nothing of the piano tinkling in the house or the children playing in the street."

"But—without money—you are not even a free man. You have to work for other people and to take—wages—you are a man of science and you take wages!"

Emanuel laughed gently. "Let us not confuse things. This kind of work does not mean dependence. I make these wares of mine. Somebody—it matters nothing who—buys them. Suppose he refuses them; another man buys them. He gives a shilling more or less—what does it matter? I owe nothing to my employers; nothing at all; since it is the Law that man must work, why should I repine at having to work? If my employer robs me, he will suffer the penalty of his sin—he and his children—to the third and fourth generation, according to the Law. I leave him to the Law, which is not mocked and must not be broken. This is not dependence. The soul is not enslaved by this kind of work. Believe me, child, not the richest man in the world has greater freedom of soul than I myself, though I work at a trade to pay my lodging."

"But you will some day fall sick. Then, if you have no money—"

"There is always a Hospital. If there is none—I shall lie under some roof or other, and either live or die."

"It is wonderful. But you will grow old; you will no longer be able to work or to wander about. What will you do then?"

"Again, there are hospitals, almshouses, retreats, refuges, workhouses. I shall creep into one of them and sit down till the end. But perhaps I shall not live to be old."

"It is wonderful," Clara repeated, staring at the man who did not want money. "Don't you, really and truly, care at all for money? Wouldn't you like to be rich?"

"Since I do very well as I am, why should I want to change?"

"But the rich man has power."

Emanuel laughed. "Power! There spoke the Voice of our People. We desire power above all things, partly because power has been denied us for two thousand years, partly because the desire for power is a national instinct. There is no more masterful race than ours in the whole world, none that is more fond of authority. The heaviest curse that has been laid upon our race is not the Dispersion, nor the loss of Zion, but the deprivation of power. We who were born to rule have been made to obey. We desire power. We seek to recover it in the only way open to us—by means of wealth. But as for me, I do not desire power. I might abuse it if I had it. Power is a very dangerous thing, especially after two thousand years of weakness."

"But, Emanuel, you know—you are one of Us—you know—it is not only power—or we should stop when we had made money—it is always more money—we talk all the time about money, and think continually about making more and more. When are any of us content with what we have? My father is rich, but he is always in some new scheme for making more money. To be always making money—it is like breathing with us. You are the only man I have ever met who does not want money. Oh! and not our People alone. The Christians are the same. Even at Cambridge I found the young Dons all wanting to make money—more money—always more money. All over the world it is the same. Always more money. Only that our People are clever and actually succeed in doing what the rest are trying to do. Not to want money? It is a reproach, Emanuel, thrown at your own People."

"But I blame no one, Clara. I remember that for many centuries we were forbidden to follow any other occupation. For my own part, I was born with other traditions, for I am of that stock which kept alive the light of science in the early ages. My fathers were physicians, mathematicians, astronomers. When

the Jews were expelled they remained; they conformed outwardly. In secret they remained Jews—"

"Why, that is like Francesca, only her people were Moors."

"There were no Moors who retained their ancient faith. My People became statesmen, generals, bishops even, and priests and monks. One of my House—it was three hundred years ago—a learned Benedictine, but a secret Jew, when he lay a-dying, sent for a Bishop of great piety in order to receive Extreme Unction, as his brethren thought. When the Bishop entered, the dying monk sat up in his bed. 'Hear, O Israel,' he began, feebly, repeating the last confession of a Jew at the point of death. 'The Lord my God is one God,' continued the Bishop, finishing the confession for him, for the Bishop, too, was in secret a Jew. The family history, perhaps, has taught me to think less of money than most of my brethren."

"This is just like Francesca's history. Pray go on, Emanuel. I knew that you could not be a common man."

"No man is common, child. As for me, I have contracted the habit of wandering. I must wander. I must be alone—in the desert, among the mountains—to meditate. Here in the West no one meditates—they talk. If a man ever, by accident, finds himself alone, he reads—he reads articles in magazines. Reading destroys the power of meditation. That is why there is so little wisdom in the West. Since Carlyle died, the only wise men of the West are two or three men of science. Now in the East there is always the Solitary who meditates. Alexander passed him on the road to India. The redcoats pass him on their way to and fro. Civilization and conquerors pass him by, the world goes on, but the Solitary who meditates sits always by the roadside." He looked across the cemetery with far-off gaze, as if he, too, would shortly become that Solitary. "Believe me, child, there are those who find no other joy in life but to be still and to meditate. What fills the Christian convents? Only the desire to save their souls? Nay! but their Church professes to do this for them in the world. It is the desire for the quiet life—the instinct to sit apart and to meditate—that possesses some souls."

"Do you wish girls to meditate? On what should we meditate?" These questions seem to demand a certain adjective—the word "pert" occurs to me—but Clara put the questions in all

seriousness. The serious, even solemn, words and look of the man impressed her.

"You are a woman—women never meditate. Wisdom comes not to them by meditation. They observe; they receive; they remember."

"Then I am glad that I am a woman. But tell me more about yourself, Emanuel. While you are talking I have always a sense of having seen you before. Where?"

"Perhaps in your last existence. Our souls pass from life to life."

"It is your voice, your face—well, tell me more about yourself—if you will, that is. If you do not wish to tell me anything, forgive a girl's idle curiosity. Why are you not living with your equals? Because you are not a working-man, whatever you may pretend? You have belonged to society at some time or other. Yesterday you spoke of Art, and I perceived that you know the language of Art—the language of the studios."

"When I was young I knew many artists in Paris and frequented their studios. So I learned their language. At that time I took up the graving-tools and acquired my present trade."

"Oh! you have lived among the artists of Paris?"

"You question me, child, as if I were concealing something. Very well. There is nothing to conceal. I will tell you anything you want to know. Yes; I was born in Paris. We were Spanish nobles, and, as I told you, Jews in secret. When the Revolution came, and the accursed Inquisition disappeared, we went back to our own People, and my grandfather laid down his titles. We left Spain with the French. My father was a physician in Paris. I studied science, and presently went to Germany to work under Liebig. In those days I looked forward cheerfully to spending my life in a laboratory. Then I returned to Paris." He paused.

"And then?"

"I married." He paused again. "This marriage of mine—an unfortunate marriage—was the reason why I gave up my career and went away into the wilderness, where I have remained ever since. I like the wilderness—and the people who live in it. I shall go back to them before long. They are rude people, yet you would be astonished to find how little difference there is between yourself and your sister of the black tent. She only knows her tent, the Desert, and the stars—and the will of her husband.

What do you know that is better worth knowing? Take away her children and husband and she dies of grief, like you. Give her love and kindness and she is happy—like you."

"But you did not leave your wife, Emanuel, to die of grief?" Eve in her curiosity persisted while there was still a point left to clear.

"No. She drove me away because she made life impossible. For she became a rebel against the Law of God, which is the Law of Nature. She would command who was made to obey, and as she was stubborn we parted by mutual consent, and I left her and went away."

Clara gazed into his face in silence, as one who hears a strange thing and finds it familiar, and wonders where she heard it last. Then she started up and clapped her hands. "Oh!" she cried, "I know now—oh, I know now—who you are! Yes, yes, now I understand. Why, I saw the likeness from the very first,and was so stupid as not to see it. Why, Emanuel, you are none other than Emanuel Elveda himself. Why—yes—now I understand it all. You went away because your wife would not obey. Your name is Emanuel Elveda, and your wife's name was Isabel. Oh! what will they say? What will they say? For they think that you are dead!"

"Certainly. I am Emanuel Elveda. Why not? You speak as if you knew the woman who was my wife?"

"Yes—I know her. Have you not heard what she has done?—how she rebels openly and continually and publicly against the submission of women?"

"I know nothing about her. I am dead to her. She is dead to me. We ask not what the dead are doing. Do not speak to me of her."

"As you please—yet—but—as you please."

She wondered why he did not inquire after his daughter. Was Francesca, too, dead to him? "Why," she asked, "did you call yourself Ellis? Why not Elveda at once?"

There were two questions in her mind. One was, "Why do you not ask after your child?" a very important question—and the other was the comparatively unimportant one about his name. Fortunately, or unfortunately, she put the latter.

"I do not know. Your father suggested that it would be more convenient. It mattered nothing to me."

Now the daughter of Mr. Aldebert Angelo was accustomed to understand that her father was a prudent—that is, a far-seeing—man, who never acted without a motive, and that with him motive was hope of gain. She was dutiful by nature and by character; she would not knowingly interfere in her father's plans without being invited to do so. She remembered the interest he showed in the Elveda household. This interest, for some reason or other, included the missing husband. She therefore concluded that it would be better for the present not to ask too much or to tell anything.

"It is wonderful," she said, "to think that you could give up all this — the great fortune, the position, the opportunities, the command of everything—and go right clean away with empty pockets all for a whim, for nothing in the world but a whim and a fad! Why, in a month you would have heard no more about the equality, and then—we should have seen very different things. Do you know how rich your wife is?"

"Have I not told you that I want no money?"

"Is there," Clara asked of the Place of Tombs, "another man in all the world—living or dead—who would give up millions of money—all for the fancy and the whim of a woman who wanted nothing but a little humoring! Emanuel, for a wise man, you have been a terrible donkey. Why, you should have given her what she wanted—the show of equality. Then you would have heard no more, because, I suppose, there never was yet a married pair who lived on terms of equality. One of them must obey. If she loved you she would have obeyed — little by little. Love would have compelled her to submit. Oh, I know what I say! We used to talk foolishness at Newnham about the submission of women, and I used to tell them of our Law, to make them feel their foolishness. Oh, you should have laughed and driven her with a silken rein!"

"So you think. But then, you neither knew her as she was, or me as I am."

"Well, but if you left your wife, why did you leave your work? Why go away? At all events, you might have gone on as before your marriage."

"I could not remain anywhere near my wife. Child!"—his voice changed, he spoke with passion—"who are you that you should understand these things? What can you know? Why, if

I had remained within a hundred miles of her—if I had stayed in any place where they talked of her—ropes, day and night, were drawing and dragging me back to her—her voice, day and night, was calling me—in dreams, day and night, I saw her—Love, day and night, was calling me, urging me, imploring me—to return to the woman I loved—what should you know of love? A girl knows nothing—oh, the strength—the power—sometimes I feel it still. How should you understand the temptation? How can a maiden who has never yet been loved understand her power of attraction?"

"Well, then—I suppose I cannot understand that any women can be worth such a fuss—but you should have listened to the voice. You a wise man? Where was your wisdom? I suppose if you had been Solomon himself you would have laid down your golden crown and wandered out alone among the Arabs. And oh! you, with your cleverness—with the world at your feet—to kick everything away because your wife was silly and whimsical! As if all women were not whimsical about something or other if they are allowed to be! And your wife was a rich girl who had had her own way, I suppose, always? You a wise man? Is this all your wisdom—not even to know that women are so made?"

Emanuel bowed his head gravely. "It is foolishness to you, but to me it was not foolishness. I live by the Law—in small things and in great. To me it is not a small thing that my wife should resolve to break the Law—the Law of Nature and the Law of the Living God."

"You take everything so seriously. You ought to be a Rabbi as well as a chemist and a wood-carver."

"Those things," he replied, very seriously indeed, "are especially the realities of life which touch the children and the grandchildren and the generations to come. Nature is hard, as the physicists say. The Law of the Lord, we say, must not be broken. The most real thing in all the world is the marriage bond, because it means the parentage of children and the future of humanity. Better to part at once than to live against the Law. Better be childless than bring up children to see the Law daily trampled upon. Should I yield to the stubborn woman? No. Should I call her stubbornness a fancy and a whim? No. But I could leave her to her folly, and so an end."

"Would you go back to her if—"

"I will never go back to her; she must come to me submissive. Enough of my wife! Remember, child, the place of the woman. It is after that of the man. There is no degradation in taking the place which you are assigned. To woman belong the things that we call after her name—womanly. Let her administrate, distribute, reward, honor, and encourage, while the man works and pours into her lap all he makes, creates, and reaps. Enough." He sat down, bowed his head over his work again, took up his graver, and was silent.

CHAPTER XIII

WHAT WILL SHE DO WITH IT?

CLARA carried home this romantic secret without imparting it to her cousin, who was not, indeed, in a state of mind favorable for the reception of any secret. The greatest secret of the whole world—even the secret of life—would fall flat on the ears of a girl sick with love suppressed. She carried it home, uncertain what to do with it. She had found Francesca's father! She had found the man whose portrait Francesca kept continually before her, wreathed like the Icon of a Saint with flowers ever fresh! Francesca's father, who was dead, had returned to life! Should she tell her? And how should she tell her? But it was her father's secret. He knew it. It was his secret. She must tell him what she had discovered. And she could do nothing in the matter except with his knowledge and consent.

At dinner that same evening she began to talk of her cousin's lodger.

"Yes," said her father; "he's a superior kind of man. And his work is good. There's the right feeling in it. In twenty years' time it will have a name, and will be worth money."

"He is a man of education," said Clara, reddening.

"Oh! you think so, do you?" Mr. Angelo glanced sharply at his daughter. "You've been talking to him, I suppose. Well, he is a man of education—more than most. And what are you coloring up for, Clara?"

"Well, father, if you take up a man on the mere strength of an introduction from Hamburg and place him in lodgings with my cousin Nell, who never had a lodger before and doesn't want one, it's very clear that you had some reason, and I hope you won't think I am spying and prying into your reason for anything—"

"I don't think any such thing, my dear. It would be a poor lookout for both of us if I did think so. But go on."

"Well, father—suppose this man told me certain things—suppose I was to find out certain things—"

"Then, my dear, you would hold your tongue about those things."

"How am I to distinguish the things that I must keep to myself from the things that I may talk about?"

"My dear, do you know the story of the man who saw the Devil? 'How did you know,' some one asked him, 'that it was the Devil?' And he said, 'My friend, when you do see the Devil, you'll know fast enough that it is the Devil.' So I say, when you do find out those things, you will know fast enough that you mustn't talk about them."

"Well, father"—after receiving this Oriental apologue—"the fact is, I have found out certain things, and as I don't quite know what you would like me to do, I've said nothing. Perhaps I had better tell you at once."

"That is the very best thing you can do."

"This Mr. Ellis attracted me from the beginning. I seemed to know his face and his voice; then his manners were so beautiful—not only the gentle, courteous manner which we sometimes find among our own People, even the poorest, but he has the manners and the bearing of a gentleman. He belongs to gentlefolk—you can see that at once."

"Go on, Clara."

"That made me curious. I began to suspect that he was a Russian Jew, compromised, perhaps, in some Nihilist plot or something of the kind. So I talked more to him, and I found out all kinds of interesting things about him. He knows science, art, literature, music—everything. He talks I don't know how many languages; he has travelled everywhere; he is a chemist, and—most wonderful of all—he doesn't want money."

"Doesn't want money? Well, my dear, these clever men have all got a craze somewhere. Doesn't want money? Lucky we are not all clever men. Go on, Clara. Dear me! Doesn't want money!"

"This very afternoon he told me why he gave up his old life and became a wanderer and a working-man. He told me without any concealment. He was just married to a rich wife, and she was an obstinate person who preached nonsense about woman's submission, and refused to obey her husband; so he walked out

of the house, which I suppose was hers, and left her, never to return. He gave up everything—the great fortune, and the position, and everything—all because his wife was possessed by a fad. Now, directly he told me this I understood everything: the likeness that haunted me, the voice that I seemed to know, the eyes that were familiar. Why, father, they were Francesca's eyes, and her voice, and her face, and the face is the same as that of Francesca's miniature! So I started up, and I cried, 'You are Emanuel Elveda!'"

"And he owned up, did he?"

"Yes. He said there was no concealment necessary—that he had nothing to hide. He has come over on some business. This done, he will go away again. Now, father, what am I to do? Shall I tell Francesca?"

"Not yet."

"What shall I do?"

"Tell nobody at present. Go and see him as often as you please. I think he is a soft-hearted creature—else he would want money—and perhaps your conversation may keep him in the country a little longer—"

"If I knew what you wanted to do— There is always the chance of making some mess of things. Of course, if it's business—"

The details of business are in certain households considered taboo. This prevents a good deal of awkwardness, especially where things are bought for little and sold for much, or where things are bought and sold under assurances that go very near the wind indeed. The practice saves explanations, and enables the ladies of the family to hold up their heads and to feel a glow when they send subscriptions to charitable objects.

"Why shouldn't you know, Clara?" her father replied. "You are not a chatterer. Besides, it's not likely that the business, whatever happens, will turn out to be any good to ourselves. The man is Madame Elveda's husband. Of course you know that the Spanish Moor story is rubbish; both she and her husband are, like ourselves, Spanish Jews; and as for madame, I will tell you now that she is neither more nor less than your own cousin. Yes, you needn't look surprised. Your own cousin. She was Isabel Albu, granddaughter of Albu, the contractor, who made an immense fortune out of the English in the Peninsular War.

Your own cousin, Clara. I called upon her the other day and reminded her of the fact. Francesca is your own cousin, too. Very well, then. The girl is heiress to a million and a half, at least. A million and a half. Or two millions. That's a pretty tidy little fortune, isn't it? The mother can leave it as she pleases, but of course she will give it all to her daughter. A very nice little fortune to be in a family, isn't it? Why, only at 3 per cent. it's forty-five thousand a year. If I had it I would make it 15 per cent. and two hundred thousand a year. My word, Clara, think of that! Well, the long and short is, that we ought to keep this great fortune in the family if possible."

"How can we?"

"Now you understand why I wanted you to be friendly with the girl. What do you think, Clara, of reconciling husband and wife? Eh? Of bringing the wife and her daughter back to their own People? Eh? Isn't that worth trying? Then the girl will have to marry one of our own People, eh? I only wish you were a boy, Clara."

"Well, father, if you try to move the husband you will be just trying to move a rock. That is quite certain. Stubborn? He is as immovable as the Law itself. And if you can imagine madame going back to her husband—Madame Elveda, all pride and dignity and stateliness, going back in humility and submission—well, I can't. That's all."

"Very well. I've told you everything. Perhaps you will devise some way. Think it over, Clara."

Next morning at breakfast Clara resumed the subject, "I've been thinking all night," she said, "about Emanuel Elveda."

"Well?"

"You want this man to be reconciled to his wife, and to exercise the influence of a husband over her; and you want somehow to keep this great fortune in our own family?"

"Exactly."

"If Francesca were to marry a Christian it would be lost to us."

"It certainly would."

"Well, she has had one offer—lots of offers, but only one to speak of—from a very desirable person indeed, who will very likely be an Earl. She refused him because she would not be submissive to any man. But she loves him all the same—remem-

ber that. I know she loves him. She doesn't say much, because she would never confess such a thing even to me. She thinks about him continually, and I should never be surprised to hear that she had changed her mind and accepted him. Still, so far, she has refused him."

"So far—good."

"The more I think about it the more I am persuaded that any attempt to bend the proud will of Madame Elveda or her husband would be utterly useless. If they were common persons, who had merely quarrelled and reviled each other, it would be different. But they are not; they are very responsible persons; and they respect each other too much, and they respect themselves too much. Would it be possible for Madame Elveda—the leader of the women—to confess that her whole career has been based upon a mischievous mistake? She never could—never—never—never!"

"Well—what would you do? You talk as if you had got a plan."

"If the case of the wife is hopeless, it is still worse with the husband, who is so stiff for his religion and the Law. But can we try something with Francesca herself? Now think, father. Emanuel Elveda does not know that he has a daughter. Francesca does not know that she has a father living. Suppose I bring them to each other without telling them what we know? Francesca will be attracted by the man from the very beginning. Oh! I am sure of it. His eyes, that rest on one and seem to read your thoughts; his face, which might be the face of the Prophet Elisha himself; his voice — his manner — will strike straight into Francesca's imagination; she will respect him; she will soon reverence him; she will be prepared to learn that he is her father; and that once learned, she will obey him in everything."

"Well, my dear"—Mr. Angelo was not sufficiently versed in the feminine mind to comprehend the subtlety—"it seems to be beating about the bush. For my own part, I should have driven the girl over there in a hansom cab, and I should just have said, 'Francesca, here's your Pa,' or words to that effect. But perhaps you're right. Or I should have asked them both to luncheon or dinner—say at the St. James's, in a private room, and introduced them over a bottle of champagne. I should have said, 'Emanuel,

this is your only daughter. Give her a kiss,' or words to that effect."

Clara laughed merrily. "Oh! Emanuel—and Francesca—at the St. James's—over a bottle of champagne! It's too delicious to think of it. No, father; you can take a common, plain girl like me to a restaurant, and you can give me champagne. I like it. But Francesca and Emanuel! Oh!" she laughed again. "No; my plan is better."

"Clara, my dear," said her father, admiringly, "I regret less and less every day the money I laid out upon your education. It isn't only the books and things you've learned. It's the knowledge of the world and society and young ladies. Now, do you know, my dear, I confess that I should have stuck to the idea of St. James's and the little lunch. But if you pull this thing through and save the money for the family, I shall say—I shall say, Clara—that you ought to have been a boy. And I don't think you can pay any girl any greater compliment."

CHAPTER XIV

AN EXPLANATION

"You are displeased with me, mother. I have seen it for a long time."

"No, Francesca;" the elder lady laid down her pen and turned her chair. "Sit down and let us talk. I am not displeased. I have no right to be displeased with anything you do. You are free to work out your own career. I am only disappointed. I think I have the right, my child, to feel some disappointment."

"Yes—oh!—yes—and yet—" She paused, standing with joined hands, like a little girl trying to find an excuse.

There comes a time in every case of trouble when an Explanation is necessary. First, the little rift—the consciousness on one side of having given cause for offence, and on the other side of being offended—then the silence, with tacit consent, on the subject; then the awkward subject which must be avoided; then the widening of the rift; then the constraint; then the sickness, decay, and death of love, unless the Explanation steps in, like a physician, to heal and restore. And perhaps, though the little rift be mended, there remains forever the memory with a scar. In certain circles the Explanation is called a speaking up or out. "I must Speak up, and I will," says the girl to her lover. "Don't go to think I am one to be trodden on; I shall Speak up." Or one says to her friend after the row: "I had to Speak out, and I did, once for all. Now he knows; and if he never comes near me again, so much the better." The Explanation in such a case is generally a surgeon, who finally cuts the pair in two, so that they may go different ways thereafter, and scowl when they meet. The time, you see, was arrived for one or other of these two ladies to have an Explanation.

"Sit down, dear," said Madame Elveda, "and let us talk a little." Francesca, however, remained standing. "See," she continued, looking round her table, which was groaning under the

weight of letters, pamphlets, reports, and papers, "the work to which I set my hand twenty years ago has grown, as you see and know. I came here because London is the true centre of all such work as mine. I published my book, I took this house, I opened it freely to all who were working for the same end—the elevation and the emancipation of women. All those who work for women, whether I apppove their methods or not, come here—this is their house, I am their Leader. One moment, Francesca, and you shall have your say. I repeat that I am the Leader; I have gathered all the strings into my hands. No woman has ever before occupied such a position as I now hold. I am the Leader. Is this true, Francesca?"

"Of course it is quite true."

"It is also true, is it not, that I have done my best to fill you with the doctrines that I preach and profess? And you have known ever since you could understand anything what I hoped of you when you should arrive at womanhood?"

"Yes—I have always known that."

"Francesca—I ask—have I not the right to be disappointed?"

"My dear mother, what can I say? It is all quite true. And yet—"

"At our meetings you either sit silent, *distraite*, inattentive; or you look impatient—no girl's face ever betrayed her emotions as yours does. You never talk about the work; you show no kind of interest in it. Yet it is the work of my life—I have lived for no other object—except it be that of bringing you up to succeed me and to carry it on."

"I am a degenerate daughter indeed."

"What has come between us, child? Until quite lately—until a few weeks ago—you were still eager and interested. Has anything happened?"

"Yes, a great deal has happened, and all in the last week or two. I seem to have awakened. Everything looks different. It began with that business of Harold and his—you know"—she blushed and looked guilty. "He asked me if I would marry him. Well, I gave him an answer—such an answer as you approved. You expected that answer of me, did you not? Well, I gave it. Mother, you have constantly assured me that I am free, but I have only been free since I gave that answer to Harold. I gave it dutifully, and because I believed that what you wished must be right."

"Well, child, and is it not right?"

"I do not know. Since then I have been considering the subject as a free woman, not as your daughter. Can you blame me for using my freedom? In obedience to you I sent away my lover. There is, therefore, no more love for me in the world. Perhaps that is as well. I do not say that it is not as well. It would be quite impossible for me to become the dutiful wife of any other man. But remember, I have given up love in obedience to you, and without considering the matter at all. That done, I began to look into things for myself."

"You will never regret that answer, Francesca."

"You think not? But it was the question, not the answer, that I had to consider. What did that mean? After Harold went away I began to reflect for the first time what Love might mean—applied to myself, mind, not to an abstract unconditioned person—to myself."

"Well?"

Madame Elveda looked up sharply.

"I see myself," said the girl, lifting her head and looking into space, "standing beside him—beside the real man, you know—that is the first thing in Love: you get at the real creature whom nobody knows but yourself—without any uniforms and liveries and trappings and titles—the real man as he really is. I say I see myself standing beside him and close to him, so that I understand for the first time how great and noble he really is, while I myself am so small and so weak. I see that I can love him chiefly because he is so great and so strong. I tremble because I am so weak and so small. How can he love me? Oh, mother, how could such a girl as I feel anything but little and feeble in the presence of such a man? Yet it does not humiliate me that he is my superior. The greater he is the more I love him. Can any woman love a man unless she respects him? Can she respect him unless he is greater than herself? Can she marry him unless she loves him? And after she has married such a man how can she ever venture to call herself his equal?"

"Humph! But the man is said to worship the woman. Would not your lover be thinking much the same of you?"

"He could not, unless he foolishly mistook the worth of her dress and her jewels for the worth of the woman herself. Well, mother, these thoughts have filled my mind ever since that morn-

ing. Before that I never considered what love might mean, nor how love might break down all your arguments."

"I hope, then, that you will speedily desist from the consideration of so dangerous a subject."

Francesca shook her head. "I think not," she replied, gravely "Since most women marry, it is at least an important subject."

"Think, then, that man and woman, equal by nature, may possess qualities which differ and yet supplement each other. But we only claim for woman a recognized equality; an equal share in the management of the world as well as of the house. The greatest fool in the eyes of the law is a man whose civic rights are equal to those of the wisest man. Assure her legal equality to woman—she will herself take care of the rest."

Francesca shook her head.

"If the man is stronger, and the woman loves him, he will prevail."

"You need not consider love at all, Francesca—unless—"

"There is no unless, mother. My love chapter is closed. Since I cannot accept Harold's courtship, I can think of no other man. That is why I am free to tell you what I have discovered—what love would mean to me."

Her mother groaned.

"You have got all this out of Harold's proposal? Oh, what fools women are! How can we make them stand up for themselves?"

"Well, mother, that is my case—I am of the fools. But, of course, there may be marriages where people don't love each other. Then it would be easy for each to go his own way. Neither would care."

"Good heavens!" cried Madame Elveda. "Had I known what mischief that young man was going to do, he should never have entered this house."

"But, my dearest mother, women, you say, must be the equals of men; otherwise—otherwise—well—but—given the case of a woman who loves a man greatly her superior. Equality in that case is impossible, and submission is a joy. Will you grant the possibility of such a case?"

"When the woman is a fool—yes."

"Let me go on confessing, mother. Since I have been thinking of these things I have begun to feel a kind of repugnance to

the whole question. You say that I have sat inattentive at your meetings. It is because the subject seems altogether altered. The speeches of your friends have become a flow of meaningless words—words—words that I know by heart—words that have no meaning. It is like a nightmare to listen to words that have no meaning. There is a voice within me that keeps on asking the same question, 'If women are the equals of men, why don't they prove it?' They are, you see, as well educated; they would become leaders in everything if they were man's equals. Yet all the leaders in everything are men—always men. And if we score a little triumph of a degree at Cambridge, we rejoice as much as if Huxley were a woman or Darwin were in petticoats. Why don't women prove their equality? And why, when a woman loves a man, does she cheerfully become his servant? Why do not women who love their husbands assert their equality?"

Madame Elveda listened with ominous gloom. "You are free," she said, "to develop any line of thought you please, or to take up any line of action. If you resolve upon devoting yourself to the destruction of your mother's life-long work, you can do so. I will not try to prevent you."

"Indeed, mother, I could never—oh, it is cruel to think that I could attack your work!"

"My dear, if you are not with me you are against me. My daughter—mine—cannot be neutral."

"Then what am I to do? Shall I pretend?"

"No. But think seriously about the questions—the great questions—at issue. Put aside this nonsense about love, which is only an incident—an illusion—a pleasant, short-lived dream. Suppose you have had it; let it pass. Consider the great question of woman's condition. Perhaps you might with advantage read my book again."

"I know it by heart—except the figures: the degradation of women, their hard lot, their miserable wages. I know it all."

"And yet you cannot work for them. Is your heart of stone, Francesca?"

"Indeed it may be, for all I know. Perhaps it is."

"If I have failed to convince my own daughter, I have failed indeed."

"How shall I explain, mother? You have convinced me that there are very great injustices. When we discussed the position

and condition of women at Newnham I used to employ your facts and your arguments. I had the greatest success with them. They convinced everybody; but, somehow, they moved nobody. How is it that arguments never move anybody? The poets and the novelists move the world; logic never moves. We all agreed that we were the equals of man; we would never, never show submission to any man. And now I hear that they are all marrying in the usual way without any more heroics about submission."

"That means that under existing social arrangements they can only obtain a certain amount of personal freedom by accepting the authority of a husband."

"I read once of a parson who preached himself into infidelity. Sometimes I think that this is my case. My arguments no longer persuade me; they are sounds and words carrying no sense. Woman is man's equal. Oh! you have proved it in your book and in your articles and pamphlets. All the women in the world except one or two take the lower place without revolt or murmur; they have never in any single line of intellectual work proved themselves his equal; and they only love a man when they feel him to be greater and stronger than themselves. All that proves nothing. And yet—I say these things, mother, because they explain my present condition. Perhaps it is a passing cloud."

"Let us pass by the married women. Consider only the women who work. The field is large enough."

"The simple condition of women who have to work. Well, mother, my case as regards these people is even worse. When I read about women oppressed and starved—whether in London, or Paris, or Berlin—it is no more to me than if I were reading of women in China. They are just as far off and just as unreal. I have got no heart, I believe."

"But this is not natural, Francesca. Why should they be unreal?"

"Mother, is it not a natural result—if you come to think of it—of the life we have led? What have I got to do with the world, who have been brought up outside the world? Oh, I do not doubt but you acted for the best, and when you parted with your husband you left his People, and, I suppose, your own. Consider. I am the only girl in the whole world, I think, who has no cousins"—here her mother changed color—"no brothers, sisters, relations of any kind, no family ties, no memories, no re-

ligion, no home, no country even—nothing at all to connect me with the world except the things of birth and growth and decay, not even a playfellow or a school-fellow. When I went to Newnham it was a new experience for me to find girls whose minds—and hearts—were full of other people. It made me envious sometimes, wretched sometimes, to feel myself so lonely. Why, I remember one girl, for instance, she was the daughter of a country Vicar; she knew every soul in her native village; she taught the children, nursed the sick, made clothes for the babies, played the organ in the church; she had half a dozen brothers and sisters; one brother whom she loved the most was a prodigal; one sister was married and full of anxiety about her children. All this little world was her own; she knew how everybody in it felt; she felt with them; she was never alone; her own self seemed lost. Through them her sympathies went out here and there in long reaches. To me, what are these people? Shadows—shadows. I cannot feel for them—I have no heart. Now this girl was the servant of all these people—their submissive servant—because she loved them all. She is now engaged, and I am quite certain that she will never ask herself whether she is the equal of her lover or not."

"You make me more unhappy, child, than I can say."

"I am very sorry. But I have nearly finished. In my present frame of mind you see that I cannot possibly help you in your work. I am quite out of harmony with it. I understand—just through considering how it might have been had I allowed myself to love Harold—that the submissive wife may be, after all, the happiest—I suspect that women are not the intellectual equals of men—any more than they are his physical equals. In short, I am in a state of doubt and confusion. Whether it will last or not, I do not know. They say that in religion people sometimes pass through phases of doubt and come out only the stronger. Perhaps I may do the same thing."

"Perhaps, if you do not mix up imaginary love and nonsense. What do you propose, however? Will you face these foolish doubts, child, and knock them over? Believe me, they are but bogies—not real objections."

"I would rather imitate Jephthah's daughter and mourn my loveless fate upon the mountains—perhaps, in the long-run, she overcame her doubts and acknowledged her father's wisdom. I

should like to sit in my own room—which would stand for mountains—secluded from a world which I do not know, and, while I was considering these doubts, cultivate Art with such girls as I could get to sit with me."

"Would a life of Art satisfy your soul? My dear, I offer you a life of Action."

"I do not know what would satisfy my soul. In imagination I see a submissive wife, who tells me she is happiest. Perhaps, mother, we might go back to our old life, and wander about from hotel to hotel and watch through the windows the Passing Show."

"Oh, Francesca!" Her mother took her hands, but the girl drew back.

"There is another thing, however. It has been suggested to me—I don't know whether it will be any use—I have very little faith in it—still, if you like, I will try it—seeing that I am so out of harmony with your work, it would be better for you—and for both of us—if I left you for a while. I am told that it is not good for me to brood and worry about difficulties in my own room. To be sure, I am more used to be alone than most girls. And a plan has been suggested—if it meets with your approval."

"You have your freedom, Francesca. Since you came of age you have your own banking account. There is no question of my consent."

"That is a *façon de parler*, mother. You know that I could not undertake any serious step without your consent, and this is a very serious step. It is nothing less than a complete change of all my surroundings: I am to leave this house and go to live in small lodgings in a quarter filled with working-people and see the working-world — talk to it face to face — the working-world, of which I have heard so much and seen so little. Perhaps in this way I shall return to sympathy with your work. I do not know—the thing may fail. I am not hopeful. I am not going with any charitable purpose. The pity and the love for these sisters of mine which my hard heart cannot feel may come to me when I understand that they are truly my sisters—if I can once understand such a thing. Perhaps, when I get—if ever I can get—a heart of my own, I shall be able to understand and to move the hearts of others."

Afterwards Francesca reproached herself for these words. What had her mother done except to write papers and books and articles?

"Indeed, Francesca," said her mother, coldly, "after this extraordinary revelation — though I cannot understand it at all — some such step is clearly desirable. A complete change of scene and companions is perhaps necessary. Only, be careful of your companions. I consent, since you wish for my consent; and I approve, since you wish for my approval."

"I am going to lodge in the house of a young woman who teaches music. She will go about with me. The thing has been arranged by a cousin of hers. She is quite respectable, belonging to the class of women who work. Well, mother, if this fails, I suppose everything will fail. You must give me up, and I will sit down for the rest of my life and look out of window at the Passing Show."

You understand at whose suggestion and persuasion this notable enterprise was set afoot. Clara lost no time in carrying out her idea; she would make Francesca known to her own father. There was the danger of one or the other finding out the name common to both, but it was Emanuel's humor to call everybody by what we others call their Christian name, and neither Francesca nor he himself was of a curious mind. Sooner or later the thing would certainly be discovered. Francesca might discover it; her father might discover it. She herself might reveal the secret.

She went straight to the point. "You are getting too full of fancies, Francesca," she said. "You want a change of scene and thoughts and company. Let me prescribe for you."

"Your prescription would be Brighton or Eastbourne, Clara. Another hotel. No, thank you."

"My prescription is going to be a very different thing. I shall take you, to begin with, out of this atmosphere of jasmine and lily. You shall go with me where you will get nothing but plain fresh air—as fresh as they can get, that is. You are unhappy with your mother because you are full of doubts and questions. You are no longer in harmony with her ideas, and you are not clear about your own. See, now, what I will do for you. I have a cousin of whom I have told you, my cousin Nell. Well, Nelly is a teacher of music; she teaches the banjo and the piano and the concertina. She lives in a house of her own. Her father, who is on the Turf, sometimes pays the rent and sometimes forgets it, and Nell keeps herself by her lessons. I

have spoken to her about you. She will let you have a bedroom and a share of the sitting-room whenever there are no pupils. And she will take you about and show you the working-world—the real workers, not the working-world of statistics—so many thousands of women working for so little a day, so many millions of submissive wives, but the world as it is. Then, perhaps, you will understand something. You shall see the cutthroat competition, after which you will not talk so glibly—not that you ever do—about sweaters. Oh, you don't know how hard it is to get work, to sell work, to pay your way at all; nor how many there are who are never able to climb up out of the dreadful ruck. And you will understand when you see the misery how strong must be the resolution to get out of it, and how brave and patient and clever must be the man who does succeed. And, if you look about, you will discover who are the men that succeed. They are of our People, Francesca—that is, of my People. They are the Jews who have these qualities and are so brave and patient. Down below, I have seen it, there is trample, trample, trample for the weak; and there is fighting, fighting, and fighting all the time for the strong."

"You tempt me, Clara. But what will my mother say?"

"Your mother is always saying that you are free. However, consult her. I want to show you what the world is, Francesca. The women have got to take their share, mind you, in the real world, without stopping to consider whether they are the equals of the men or not. There is no time for idle speculation. Oh! my dear Francesca—in this house can one say it? Can one whisper it? There isn't an atom of reality in all the advanced women put together, because ninety women out of every hundred in the world belong to the place where they trample and they fight, and they've just got to do what they can and make the best of the conditions."

Francesca sighed. "You only make matters worse," she said. "The Passing Show was a pretty play. Yours is a bloodthirsty fight."

"Come down and see. There is a man down there who will talk to you—such a wise man, Fanchon; a kind of Prophet—who wanders about the world and makes his observations. You shall be made quite comfortable. I will go over to see you as often as I can, but you will be better without me, alone with

Nelly and Emanuel—the Prophet, you know—Emanuel, the Prophet. Think it over, Francesca, and come out of this place, which is a prison, barred, though gilded and scented. With Nelly, at least, you will not be able to ring a bell if you want anything. I do believe, Francesca, if you stay with her a month, you will learn to make the puddings, and you will not even desire to return to your Magic K."

"The child is packing up things," said Melkah, the old woman, to her mistress. "What is she doing that for?"

"She is leaving us for a week or two, Melkah. She is going to stay with friends for a while."

"It is not well with her. She sits without speaking or moving. She never sings nor smiles. Marry her—marry her. Let her marry the man who loves her. Else her fancies will turn to visions, and her visions will abide with her, and she will be like unto one who is stricken by the stars."

CHAPTER XV

My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.—*Romeo and Juliet*

"Look around you, Francesca." Clara sat down on the bed, and indicated with her parasol the various points of the compass represented by the four corners of the room. "This is the cottage you have deliberately chosen instead of your Palace. This room is all that you will have for yourself until you tire of things and go home again — unless Something happens," she added, softly.

The room was certainly very small—say, twelve feet by eleven. It was also furnished as simply as a bedroom can be furnished. That is to say, there was a bed in it; there were also a chest of drawers, a single chair, and a washhand-stand; a small cupboard, a slip of carpet, and a small looking-glass completed the furniture. To the ordinary eye it suggested a house-maid's room — the chamber of the under house-maid. To Francesca it represented the furniture proper to her experiment.

Standing on the floor, open, was a trunk, one box—a large box, certainly, but one box only — which contained all Francesca's "things." This young lady of society was going to stay an indefinite time in lodgings, and had actually brought all her "things" in one box. She was engaged in unpacking these things, laying them in the drawers and hanging them up in the cupboard. It was the first time in her life that she had done this work for herself, and there was a novelty about it. Yet one cannot say that she altogether liked it. Lifting and hanging and folding fatigues even the arms of youth. While she was thus busied the talk went on, Clara doing most of it.

"The room will do very well," Francesca replied, carelessly. "It is not the room that I think about."

"You have seen Nelly. She will be your principal companion as long as you choose to stay here, unless—unless Something happens." She repeated the last words with a murmur which al-

most suggested the phrase of the old woman who, when she says "Something," means the Black Box.

"Nelly and I mean to get on very well together. And Something will happen, I am sure. Oh, I am already glad that I came! Something great will happen to me here. I feel that I shall have a great experience. As for Nelly, we shall get on. She looks as good-natured and as dainty as she is pretty."

"She is what she looks—poor Nell! Only you will find her—I don't know—rather sharper of speech and more decided in manner than most of the girls you know. She's got to keep herself, and the home as well, for her father gives her very little. She is bread-winner and house-keeper and all, and it makes her sharp. I am quite sure you will like her, Francesca. Otherwise I would never have proposed the thing. And then"—she colored a little, feeling guilty of conspiracy, and being a young conspirator, not yet hardened in crime, she could not help changing color and dropping her eyes—"and then there is Emanuel, you know."

"Yes; there's always the mysterious Emanuel. Who is he, Clara?"

"He is Nelly's lodger."

"Oh! A lodger!" Francesca's face fell. "I thought we should be alone in the house—Nelly and I and the servants together."

"The servants! My dear, it is one little maid of fourteen. And I fear you must expect to meet Emanuel at all the meals." She looked out of the window. "There he is, sitting in the sun—he can't get too much sun—without a hat, at his work. He is a wood-carver by trade."

"Oh!" Again Francesca's face fell. "A wood-carver. I am to take my dinner in the company of a working-man. Well. Why not? If it is all in the experiment, Clara, why not? I shall imagine myself to be a working-woman before I have done, I dare say."

"He is something more than a working-man, Francesca. How much more I leave you to find out. Oh, you will find him," she laughed, "a very well-trained working-man. Francesca"—Clara became very much in earnest, and laid her hand upon her friend's arm—"please, please, I implore you, do not begin by thinking of him as a working-man. You shall know the reason why afterwards. What else he is—but you shall find out for yourself."

"Very well, Clara, I will think of him as you wish." She stooped and fished up a packet from the interior of the box: a little leather case. She opened it and took out a miniature, which she placed on the mantel-shelf.

"Heavens!" said Clara, turning suddenly pale. "You have brought the portrait of your father—your father—here!"

"Why not? I carry it about with me always. It gives me a sense of protection. I am not afraid of anything so long as his picture is beside me."

"Here! Oh! I did not expect. . . . But never mind—"

Francesca pushed aside the long branches of Virginia-creeper which hung before the window. "We want more air," she said. "What a strange lookout! A great cemetery covered with tombs. The living on one side of the house and the dead on the other. They sleep quietly, Clara. I think they will not disturb me."

"The portrait of her father! Here!" murmured Clara. "Oh, she will know him at first sight!"

"There is a little garden," Francesca went on. "What a funny little garden! There is a man in it—a man with long hair, sitting at a bench in the sun, bareheaded, with a panel before him. Clara, this is your wood-carver, I suppose. He looks very busy."

"Yes," she said, "that is our wood-carver."

Francesca nodded, and went back to her work of putting away. Clara turned her eyes from the miniature on the mantel-shelf to the man in the garden.

"You said you had something else to say, Clara, while we were unpacking."

"Yes. Oh, yes, yes!—I had almost forgotten. It is only that I want you not to think any longer that you are looking out of a hotel window at the Passing Show. You are in the Show, dressed up and ready to play your own separate part. No more of the nest lined with eider-down and velvet, all apart and secluded. Here we are in the world of work."

"I shall dream that I am in it. But, of course, I can never be in the world, really, at all. It isn't healthy to sit too much at the hotel window, is it?"

"Nell will go about with you and show you things—whatever you would like to see. But don't try to see everything. You can find out what you want in two or three families as well as in

a thousand; men are all alike, I believe, only differently dressed, and we eat different things, happily." Clara shuddered, for there came into the window, wafted by the summer breath from some neighbor's house, a fragrance of fried fish. "Nelly, you know, can only take you about among her own People. If you want to see the other People you must go to the curates and the sisters and the deaconesses and the Bible women and the mission men and the Salvation lasses and the young men from the Universities. It will touch them to see a pretty girl like you interested in their work. Compassion and loveliness go well together."

"I dare say we shall not want any other than Nelly's friends."

"I sometimes think, Francesca, that if one-tenth part of the labor were spent upon our People that is yearly expended among these Christians, to lift them up and drag them out of the mire and push and shove them along the ways of virtue, the old reproach of our stiffneckedness and our stubbornness would have been broken down long ago. There must be something singularly attractive in being dirty and drunken, otherwise the London slums would cease to-morrow. Francesca, don't be persuaded to go slumming. It does no good, mind, except to make one miserable, to find human creatures living like pigs in a sty. What you want is the right understanding of humanity; and that, my dear, you will get from good honest working-people much better than from the wrecks and the failures."

"I will follow your advice, Clara," Francesca replied, smiling. "You brought me here. You shall tell me what to do."

"I want to drag you out of yourself, my dear. If you can only feel that you are like everybody else—a part of the crowd—you will be transformed. And before I have done I will give you —what? You shall see. Such gifts as you never dreamed of receiving. I shall make you twice as rich as ever you have been before."

"My dear Clara"—Francesca was touched with the sudden change into earnestness—"why do you take so much trouble about me? I am not worth it."

"That, too, you shall learn, but not to-night. Well, now, let us finish, because Nell will be expecting us. Don't be afraid to talk to Nell. She won't understand your fine ignorance about the rest of the world. She will treat you just exactly as if you were like everybody else—made up of loves and affections and

cousinships and ties here and there. Oh, Francesca!" She clapped her hands and jumped off the bed where she was sitting. "I really think there never was such a case as yours in the whole world before. You are the only person in the whole world who cannot realize that the men and women in it are really real. Now, begin with Nelly. She is ready to your hand—a capital subject. Pinch her and stick pins into her, just to find out whether she cries out when she is hurt, as you do; if she does, you have advanced a step. Find out what she wants—you will easily do that—poor thing! She wants what we all want—oh, if you reflect that you want what she wants, it will go a long way towards making you understand all women ten times as well as your mother understands them."

"What we all want? I suppose we do not all want the same thing."

"Oh yes, we do! All the same thing. My dear"—she caught Francesca's hand—"we all want love. You as much as the meanest milliner's girl in Regent Street; and you had it, and you didn't understand that you wanted it, and you threw it away all for a formula."

"You don't know what you are saying, Clara!" Francesca's cheeks glowed and her lips quivered.

"Oh yes, I do! Now, that's enough. You will find out the truth, or else I shall be sorry indeed that ever I brought you here; but remember, my dear, above all things talk to Emanuel. Talk to him when you've done pinching Nelly." Francesca turned and looked into the garden again through the Virginia-creeper. Just then Emanuel lifted his head and looked up with a sigh of weariness. The sunlight fell full upon his face. Heavens! how like it was to Francesca's face! Clara glanced sharply at her friend to see if perchance there should be any recognition. None? Strange! Yet Francesca had with her—she never went anywhere without it—the drawing of her father's face. Why did she not cry out with wonder at the likeness? But no, she showed not the least sign of recognition or trouble or doubt. The face was twenty years older, yet the same face.

"Emanuel," Clara went on, watching for some sign and talking while she watched, "will tell you many great and wonderful things. He has brought home with him some great and wonderful discovery. Nobody knows yet what it is. He leans over the

garden-wall and meditates upon it. My dear! Emanuel is not a common working-man, nor is he a common man at all. I have asked him to be gracious. Don't mind his calling you by your first name, Francesca. It is his humor. He is like a Quaker for that. In the East, where he has travelled a great deal, the Arabs call each other by one name only. I don't believe he knows my surname—"

"Is he one of your own People, Clara? But I suppose he must be."

"He is—very much. Like us, he is a Spanish Jew. Perhaps, some day, he will tell you the family history. It is interesting."

"Spanish? I am always coming across Spaniards. Yes. If it is like my own history—"

"It is exactly like your own, Francesca. Shall we go down?"

"Yes; I suppose so. I feel as if I were about to be cut adrift, and yet I am not afraid. I am on a voyage of discovery, and on the other side of the sea—what?"

"You shall see. Something that you little expect—something great. Just remember once more, dear, that you are no longer looking out of the window of a private room in an hotel. Dear me! I never before understood how a man may make himself a veritable hermitage out of a private room. He needn't go into the desert and live in a cave among serpents and mosquitoes. He needn't put on sackcloth and a hair shirt. Well, here you are, and here I shall leave you. And now—oh! These are the rules of the house. This is the last of the explaining. Breakfast at eight, dinner at one, tea at five, supper at nine, simple living. No luxuries. For society, Emanuel and Nell. Oh! And"—Clara hesitated, "there may be—I hope not, but I fear there may be—a young fellow. He isn't Love himself exactly—not with wings, you know, and a bow, but he has introduced the subject of Love, and—and—well, I don't know. But he may come in some evening with an offering of shrimps—Love's simple gift of shrimps. I hope not."

"Why not?"

"Because, great stupid, he's a Christian and she is a Jewess. Don't you understand that it can't be? We must not marry outside our own People. And Nelly's father in some things—not that on the race-course he ever asks what he eats—is the most religious of men. If a Jewess marries outside her religion she

leaves her People. Very well. That's all, I think. Oh! You must remember that Nelly's pupils mostly come to her in the evening. She wants the parlor from six to nine. And now we'll go down-stairs. After tea I shall go and leave you to—Emanuel—and, oh, Francesca!"—she kissed her friend on the cheek after the manner of maidens. "You will, I think, I hope, learn to be content to be a woman—only a woman—though you are now so cold and so proud—you poor thing!"

A tear stood in her eye and her voice broke—was not Francesca, though she was ignorant of the fact, her own cousin? Was she not contriving a beautiful conspiracy which should restore the fatherless one to her long-lost parent, with a troop of cousins, just like quite ordinary maidens? "Oh! and I quite forgot," Clara turned round at the head of the stairs; "it's no use here ringing for anything. If you do, nothing will come up. Aladdin has lost his lamp. The Magic Knob, my dear, has lost its Virtue."

CHAPTER XVI

"BID ME DISCOURSE"

Dropping into prose, Clara said that it was past tea-time, and that Nelly would be waiting, and they must go downstairs.

Nelly, in fact, was waiting. The tea was laid with an unusual display of cake and comfitures and dainty bread-and-butter. It was a tea not likely to be repeated—a tea in honor of her visitor; this young lady, fabulously rich, who could make her—Nelly—rich, and never feel it. This mental attitude in the presence of a rich person is quite intelligible, and therefore universal. Who, among poor men suffering from poverty, can stand before a very rich man without the feeling that this man, *without feeling it*, as they think and say, could remove from him the reproach of poverty? Inept poor man! The rich man could not remove the reproach of ineptitude which keeps you poor. Go! get ability, and then you will be able to stand upright before your rich man with no such envious yearning. But Nelly had never before been in the company of a rich person, and it must be confessed that she had been encouraged to respect worldly wealth above all earthly things. Therefore, she sat nervously behind her tea-tray arranging her cups and saucers, and wondered what the rich girl wanted down there—among the folk who work. Clara had told her this and that; but the more Clara talked about it the less Nelly understood. What did Francesca Elveda—her mother worth millions—want that she should leave her lap of luxury and come down to this simple, if respectable, six-roomed house in a—well, respectable though not elevated, suburban terrace? Standing at the table was the lodger—Emanuel—the working-man whom Francesca was so carefully entreated not to consider as a working-man. He had not changed his dress—he still wore his working-jacket. Francesca had expected a frock-coat at least. But he showed no consciousness of being dressed otherwise than was right. He

stood aside when the two girls entered the room, and waited to be introduced. This Clara made haste to do.

Now this was the first scene or situation—which might very well be the last—Francesca was to be presented to her own father. She had his portrait up-stairs on the mantel-shelf. Why should she not recognize him? Yet, why should she? We have already in the Chapter on Coincidence which goes before called attention to the difference between the face of twenty-five and the face of forty-five or fifty. Would you know yourself, dear reader of forty-five, when you consider that old portrait? Would your daughter know you if she had not seen you during all those years? Would she know you, if she had never seen you at all, except in a portrait taken at twenty-five? Would she recognize you if she had nothing to go by—no shifting changes in the light—look of the eyes—trick of stooping shoulders—chin in the air—carriage of the figure—no familiar music of your voice—no gesture—nothing but the face that changes not—the face painted by the sun? Would she recognize you if, in addition, your short hair had grown long, your brown beard was flecked with gray, your smooth face was lined, and your eyes were half hidden with glasses? Would your daughter, again, recognize you if you appeared before her, not in the guise of a gentleman, with a boiled shirt and a white collar, and a frock-coat all buttoned down before, and white hands, but in the dress of a better-class workingman, with a flannel shirt having a flannel collar, and a square jacket with pockets, and weather-browned, work-hardened hands?

"Francesca, dear," Clara turned furiously red, and plunged at once into her situation, taking it rather too quickly for the audience, had there been any, "this is Emanuel. It is his special wish to be addressed and to call us by the first name only. Emanuel, this is my friend Francesca, of whom—of whom—of whom I spoke to you—Francesca—who has come—come—come to stay here." Without any apparent reason Clara hesitated, stammered, and showed every sign of nervousness. But she also watched the two people whom she presented to each other, glancing curiously from one to the other. There was not in either face a spark of recognition, or even of suspicion or surprise. Yet, to her, who *knew*, the two faces were exactly alike. The secret was proclaimed; she was only astonished that Nelly did not cry out, "Why, Francesca is his daughter!" or that Emanuel did not ex-

claim, gravely, certainly, "Why, you must be my child!" or that Francesca herself did not stoop and kiss his hand, crying: "My father! I have, then, a father! I know you by your likeness to me!" None of these things happened. Therefore she went on, "Emanuel, I want you to be very kind to Francesca. Tell her things—anything. Although she is only a woman, she is really intelligent. Tell her some of the things you have told me—some of your experiences—your travels—your learning—your science—everything."

Emanuel bowed low. Francesca, perhaps prepared by what Clara had told her, perceived that here was a man to be remarked. Not, certainly, a common working-man. There was a strange beauty in his face; his serious eyes, his expression, steady and full of purpose, conveyed a sense of strength. As Clara had predicted, she was attracted—or at least interested—from the very first. When he bowed and when he spoke it was with the manner of a Duke. Francesca knew no more about Dukes—French and Italian Dukes not counting—than her biographer; but when one speaks of the Ducal manner one arrives at it by a rapid and easy calculation. One knows the plain Mister—his plain manners; one rises to those of an Esquire; a Knight Bachelor—manners just a little bit exalted; a Knight of the Bath—manners already distinguished; a Baronet—manners almost lordly; a Baron; and so on, till one arrives at the giddy elevation of a Duke and the Ducal manner. On this pinnacle, like some Simon taking his title proudly from his Pillar, stood Emanuel the Wood-carver, illustrating how fine the manner of a Duke may be.

"Clara exaggerates my powers of interesting you," he said. "But I will do what I can. Francesca, since that is your name, I am at your service." His speech, like that of the girl herself, had something of a foreign accent, but his voice was musical and flexible. Clara could not understand why he looked at Francesca so curiously. It was not the look of recognition that she expected. Probably he would proceed to ask her a question which would lead to explanations. Better if the discovery were deferred. Better for them to become acquainted first. But she sat curious, expectant, and rather afraid.

"Come," cried Nelly, tapping a cup with a spoon. "The tea is getting cold. Please leave off talking and begin."

Francesca took a chair. But Emanuel, standing over the table,

took the loaf in his hands and said something in Hebrew. Then he cut the bread and gave to each a piece. As this little ceremony was repeated at every meal it was not difficult to associate it after a little with the function called "Grace," a thing omitted in hotels and at *tables d'hôte*. Francesca, indeed, was not acquainted with even the shortest formula of grace—a defect due to her exceptional up-bringing. It was a custom of Religion, she observed. The man who repeated the Prayer brake bread and divided it.

This done, Emanuel sat down and received his tea and took his toast in quite Occidental fashion.

They sat a while in silence—Nelly shy, Clara anxious, Francesca wondering how to make conversation with a working-man who had experiences of travel and of science. Somehow she thought of Alice sitting down to tea with the March Hare. Perhaps he would propose that all should move one chair on.

"I did not expect," the working-man began, "to meet this evening one whose face I have already seen."

"Where have you seen my face, Mr.—I mean—Emanuel?" Francesca replied, jealously. When one is not a professional person of any kind it is natural to be jealous about the seclusion and privacy of one's face.

"I might say that I have seen it many times—that is to say, its type—in Spain. In London it is rarer. But that is not quite what I meant."

"We are of Spanish descent."

"That is obvious. Spain sets her mark—Spain above all other nations—upon every one of her children."

"What did you mean, then?"

"I have seen your face in a photograph. It is in the possession of a friend of yours—and of mine. Harold is his name."

"Francesca colored quickly. What right had Harold to show her photograph to this stranger—to any one?

"He did not show it to me, Emanuel replied, reading her thoughts or interpreting her blush. "It was among his private papers on his desk that I saw it, and I took it up because it was a Spanish face."

"Oh! Is Harold a friend of yours? He has never spoken to me—yes—oh, yes; I remember now"—her face lit up—"he has spoken to me often. You travelled with him. He found

you among a Bedawi tribe—you travelled up the valley of the Euphrate together. Oh! I remember your name very well. And he thinks so much of you."

"Emanuel knows everybody," said Clara."

"Yes, we travelled together."

"You are that Emanuel? Oh! he can never speak enough about you. Oh! you are that Emanuel. Oh, I am so glad to meet you! I, too, have lived in the Desert. We lived in the tents, in the Hauran and the Desert south of the Hauran, for three delightful months. Emanuel," she changed suddenly and became at once open and expansive, "since you are a friend of Harold's, you must be a friend of mine."

"Harold is a young man of great qualities. It was in order to see Harold and to bring him something—something"—his eyes brightened—"that I have discovered—something of the greatest importance—that I came here. He is my friend. I can talk to Harold."

"Talk to me as well," said Francesca; "for he has told me of the talks you had in your travels. He remembers them yet. Was he not glad to see you?"

"Very glad. We had much to say. On his table I saw your photograph."

"Francesca colored again. What had Harold told this man?

"Harold is almost my brother," she said, feeling immediately after that she had said the weakest thing possible to be said. For, having boldly advanced the principle that Harold's friends were her friends, any explanation of the situation was certainly undignified.

"Almost your brother," he repeated. "Yet, between almost and quite, how great a gulf is fixed!"

Francesca made no reply. The thing might have been said with meaning. What had Harold told him? But it was said so gently and simply that it might have been only a general proposition.

"I hear," Emanuel went on, "that you find yourself, for some cause or other, separated from the world. When one grows older, it is separation from the world that is most desired. Away from cities one can breathe and think."

"But you must first know the world."

"One must first be young; and we must define the world. This is one world, round this house—a world that works, a world

subordinate, yet a world well-to-do. Not far off is a world not so well-to-do, in positions not so assured. Farther off still there is the world of those who neither work nor live, but thieve and starve. Your world, perhaps, is another world still, which never works at all unless it works of its own choice. You can very easily, if you have imagination, feel separated from the world which works. But most women ardently desire that separation. In my youth" ("Now," thought Clara, "for the revelation which will lead to the question") "I have been in your world, Francesca; not for long; I might have stayed in it but for an unforeseen occurrence. Poor I was when I went into it; poor I came out of it; poor have I remained. It is not for me to find cheap sneers at the world which works not. Yet the true curse of labor is the curse of requiring work, as the only means of keeping in health of mind and body. We should find pity, not sneers, for the world which need not work, because for most its idleness destroys the strength and stops the growth of the finer qualities."

"I have no wish to remain idle," said Francesca. "My mother, who is wealthy, has always worked very hard."

Again an opening. Clara looked up sharply. What had her mother done? Advocated the independence of women. Why did not Emanuel ask the nature of that work?

The chance was missed. Emanuel went on—generalizing—in his incurious manner, as if it mattered nothing about particular cases. "The best kind of work," he said, "is recognized all over the world to be that which is done for all mankind. The preacher and the teacher, the statesman and the law-giver, the physician and the lawyer, the man of letters, the poet and the painter, the man of science, the architect and the engineer, these men occupy a place far higher than the trader or the manufacturer or the producer. If your work concerns humanity, you cannot be separated from mankind."

"But I must first find my work."

"Young lady," he replied, "I know not yet what your gifts may be. For work of the nobler kind women are not called—no woman yet has advanced art or science or literature; not one has advanced humanity. But, I say again, I know not what your gifts may be. Perhaps to receive, to understand, and to interpret may be given to you—as it has been given to some women, who yet have not been wives and mothers."

"Emanuel thinks," said Clara, "that all women should be wives. That is the Teaching of our Religion."

"That is to say, it is the Law of Nature. Woman's proper work is laid down for her in certain lines. Outside those lines most women are unhappy. In this world which works, the women, I find everywhere, have all one hope. It is to become wives, and so to change unnatural work for that which is natural."

"We cannot all be married, Emanuel," said Francesca. "What is a girl to do who wants work and does not wish to marry?"

Emanuel gently waved his hands. "We must find that woman, and then inquire into her gifts."

He relapsed into silence, and drank his tea. Then he rose, gravely bowed, and left the room.

The three girls chatted for a few minutes. "It is nearly six!" cried Clara. "I have to get home to dinner at seven, and it is Sabbath eve—I must fly. Francesca, I leave you to the tender mercies of Nelly and Emanuel. Good-bye. I will not try to see you until you send for me. Farewell, my dear. Good-bye, Nell." She ran away.

"I'm afraid, Francesca," said Nell, timidly, "that I've got a pupil coming at six."

Francesca sought the refuge of her little room; the westering sun fell full upon her face; below, at the end of the narrow garden, stood Emanuel leaning over the low wall, looking across the field of graves—the stony waste and wilderness of tombs. How huge a pyramid might be made only out of the tombs in London graveyards of those whose memory is long ago forgotten, though the granite slab, or the headstone, or the broken shaft remains! The attitude of the man was one of meditation.

She sat down at the window and looked at this man—this working-man who spoke with authority—the man who had so profoundly impressed Harold—the man whom Clara prayed her so earnestly not to regard only as a working-man. Then she leaned her head upon her hands, and in the warm summer air her thoughts began to wander. The thoughts of the young wander hither and thither easily; they are impatient of control, yet they are easily controlled. They are, as the poet hath said, long thoughts. They are desires and ambitions, they are dreams, they are paintings, they are illusions. When they are over they are forgotten—because one is young. For the old there are no such

waking dreams. There is no earthly future; their work is finished. Therefore they dream no longer, but, with what strength remains, they work. As for the merry days when all was young, when they loved and danced and sang; when they were strong and did splendid work; when they were men, and fought their way— No, no; to remember is sadness; to look forward is more sadness—with endurance—and—what else?

Francesca was young; she had visions of I know not what. Emanuel was old—to such as Francesca forty-five is considered old. What had he? Visions? Meditations? Does wisdom come to him who leans over a wall and thinks?

When Francesca came back to earth, the clock, an old-fashioned cuckoo clock in some adjoining house—there is no church-clock in their hearing of that street—was striking seven. Emanuel still remained motionless. He was, perhaps, as he desired, separated in spirit from the world. Down below the tinkling of a banjo showed that a lesson was going on. This delightful instrument is perhaps never heard to greater advantage than when a beginner is taking his first lessons upon it. As an accompaniment to the intermittent, but persistent, notes of the banjo—for the beginner possessed courage—there was wafted upward from the street in the front of the house a mingled music of children's shouts and cries, the laughter of maidens, and the louder talk of matrons.

Francesca listened. Then the old feeling came over her. She was again at the hotel window looking out at the Passing Show. She was alone among the Phantoms. The working-man who was also a kind of Prophet, who preached to Harold in the Desert, and took tea and toast with Nelly and herself, and meditated among the tombs, was only one more grotesque figure added to the clown and pantaloon and the man who led the dancing-bear.

She sprang to her feet, caught her hat and jacket, and fled down the stairs and into the street below.

CHAPTER XVII

"COME, MY BELOVED, TO MEET THE BRIDE"

THOSE who know the meaning of that strange obsession, that mysterious incubus, which sits in the brain, turns real things into unreal, suggests dangers, conjures phantoms, will understand why, when that terror of the Passing Show rose up before Francesca's mind, she fled into the street. There, at least, she would not be alone; there she would be one of the crowd. It is a medicine which alleviates but cannot cure, like so many of the physician's prescriptions. She would not be alone; she could not in the street imagine herself looking out from the hotel window upon the crowd below.

The street itself was filled with children playing; an average of half a dozen children to every house, for no man in this street had reason to be afraid of meeting his enemy at the gate. It is a fine breed of humanity, the offspring of the better kind of working-man; let us have as many of them as we possibly can —to work for us at home; to fill our colonies for us abroad. Unconscious of what fate had in store for them, these future pillars of the Empire were playing in the road, a very paradise of a playground, because no vehicles except the dust-cart and the milk-cart—both personally and carefully conducted—ever came into it, and nobody could possibly be run over. On the pavement were walking, arm in arm, two by two, the maidens of the place, not factory girls with flaming feathers, but quietly dressed girls, of quiet manners: girls employed somewhere all day long—cashiers, accountants, post-office attendants, teachers, dress-makers, milliners—there is now no employment which does not want girls for something or other. These were, like Nelly, of the better class—girls in what is considered good employment, at good pay. Their day's work was done; they walked together, and talked *chiffons*, and enjoyed the soft air of July. There were no young men among them; these were all on the

country roads, miles away, mounted on bicycles. So long as a girl has a young man, like other girls, and is therefore enabled to maintain her self-respect, she prefers to be left alone among other girls. The conversation of men is apt to run too much on shop and the "screw" and prospects. On proper occasions, in the winter, the young man must show himself. Meantime, girls, as a rule, get on a good deal better among themselves and without the men on a warm summer evening. They looked curiously at Francesca; they parted and made way for her to pass; they exchanged glances as she passed through them—the glances meant, without a word, that the hat and the jacket and the gloves were things quite, mournfully quite, beyond their means; their glances meant surprise, wonder, approbation, and envy. Francesca looked in their faces as she walked, curiously and wistfully. Had she dared she would have stopped one here and one there to ask how she found the world, and what she thought of woman and her servitude; but the girls' faces were not encouraging—they looked uncomplaining, even happy. They looked like asking her questions instead of answering; their eyes said: "Who are you? why are you here? Oh, what a lovely hat!".

Francesca found herself presently in a broad thoroughfare. Omnibus and tram-car rolled along the road; working-men, young and old—but, like soldiers, working-men are always young—lounged along, pipe in mouth, with the occasional well-known and expected jest: on a July evening—or, indeed, on any evening after work, who would take the trouble to invent new jokes? They were good-humored working-men, and they paid no attention to a girl of the better class—why should they? To pay attention to any girl indicates imagination, and this is not a common quality among those who earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. Manual labor destroys the imagination; he who digs cannot become a poet. Then there were boys—boys of fifteen—who walked along, cigarette in mouth, each accompanied by his girl, a year older or a year younger; sometimes they sat on a door-step, and so took the freshness of the evening air. They looked happy, these youthful couples, and as Francesca knew nothing of the Early Marriage Tragedies, she was pleased to see them happy. Then came the matron, basket in arm, who had done her shopping and was going home; or the workgirl belated, carrying an immense bolster of work as big as herself; or the

"little mother" of eight with a baby of two in her tiny arms. And from the public-house came loud talk, and as the door swung open and shut, the foul breath of bad tobacco, bad beer, bad spirits, and bad language. Yet it was quite early evening, and it wanted an hour to sunset. And all the way and everywhere, besides the crowd on the pavement and the busy life of the road, there were the shops on one side, with their eager, busy shopmen, and on the other side of the broad pavement on the curb long rows of stalls, where they offered for sale, with loud talk and chaff and jokes and shouting, things innumerable: all the things that there are to sell, except, perhaps, a few things that are reserved for Bond Street. A cheerful crowd; a gathering of people who were happy simply because they were gathered. Great is the power of even so casual an association; contentment, rest, satisfaction, sat upon all their faces. Astonishing!

Francesca walked along timidly; she thought that perhaps one of the young working-men might address an observation to her; many of the young men addressed observations to the girls they passed, evidently without introductions. What should she do or say in such a case? Or, if she looked about too curiously it might be remarked. Therefore she kept as much as she could to the side of the stream near the houses, and listened and watched, trying to look as if she had important business which took her out.

But the hypochondriac feeling had left her; she felt no longer as if she was looking on at the Passing Show; she was no longer at the hotel window; she was down below, one of the crowd, in the throng and the thick of it.

She walked about half a mile down the road, then, as there seemed no change in the crowd and her steps showed her always the same thing—the crowd on the pavement, the trams in the road, the stalls where everything was sold, on the curb—since it was all the same, she turned and walked homeward. So far the crowd had not saddened her. Why should it sadden her? I know not. She had expected somehow to be saddened, and she was exhilarated. She remembered the Voice which she had heard from the marching crowd at Charing Cross. It was a Voice of Hope.

It was just eight when she reached the house. The pupil was gone, the lesson was finished, the music and the banjo were put

away in the corner. Nelly was bustling about the room putting things in order, a dusting-cloth in her hand. Emanuel, also present, was doing something to help. There was something of the appearance of a Function—that is to say, the putting away seemed in some cases superfluous.

"Will you help, Francesca?" asked Nelly.

"What is there to do? You are lifting up things and putting them back again."

"Oh! I forgot. Clara told me. You don't know everything. Why, you see, it is the Eve of the Sabbath. Everybody in the house from the master to the maid does something to prepare for the Sabbath. It is the Law."

"Your parents have probably left the People and the Faith," said Emanuel. "Clara told me something of this."

"We do not belong to the People or to the Faith. We are Spanish Moors."

"Spanish Moors?" asked Emanuel. "I am a Spaniard, but I know of no Spanish Moors. There is Moorish blood in Spain, without doubt. But—"

"Our religion was Islam," said Francesca. "We were settled in Spain for a thousand years."

Emanuel shook his head. "You have been settled in Spain," he said, "for two thousand years, unless your face deceives me. None the less, you know not the Law. Learn, then, that with us it is a duty for every one to assist at preparing for the Sabbath. The most learned Rabbi is not too proud to lay the fire or to chop the wood or to spread the cloth." In fact, he himself went through the form of laying the fire, while Nelly spread a clean white cloth. "There is nothing low or menial in preparing for the Sabbath. We welcome the day as a royal bride. 'Come, my beloved,' says our hymn, to 'meet the bride: the presence of the Sabbath let us receive.'"

Nelly placed two loaves of bread from a tray on the table and covered them with a clean napkin.

"The two loaves," said Emanuel, "are simply the double portion of manna which fell on the Sabbath Eve. Thus our children are every week reminded of the past. There is a napkin above and a napkin below. Thus fell the dew upon the manna and beneath it. But this is superfluous. Our People have carried their refinements and symbols in some cases perhaps too far. They

were careful, however, that in ages of ignorance the people should be never suffered to forget their history."

Nelly placed other things on the table; things which made up the supper.

"Everything," Emanuel continued, "is prepared and cooked to-day in readiness for this evening and to-morrow. Nelly," he looked at his watch, "the sun is setting."

Nelly placed on the table a large lamp; it had seven wicks, a fact which Francesca did not observe, to stand for the seven days of the week. It was just before sunset. The western glow was reflected into the room from a window in the opposite side of the street, falling upon the girl and upon Emanuel, and upon the white table, making the whole glorious. Nelly lighted the lamp. When she had done so she spread out her hands, repeating in a low voice a Hebrew prayer. Emanuel translated the words.

"This is the Woman's prayer," he said. "The Woman says this prayer on the Eve of Sabbath and of all Fasts and Feasts. It means, 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast sanctified us with Thy precepts and commanded us to light the Sabbath lamps.' It is the privilege of the Woman to light these lamps. As everything that we do commemorates, atones, and praises, this act is a commemoration and an atonement of the sin of Eve, who extinguished the light of the world. It is also, as you see, a prayer of praise and blessing. The importance of the lamps is greatly impressed upon us in the Talmud. She who lights it must be dressed in her best."

Francesca now observed that Nelly was dressed in her newest and daintiest frock, looking very pretty and holiday-like. By this time other things were placed upon the table, and Nelly invited her guest to take her place. "We ought to have been to Sabbath Eve service," she said. "To-morrow, Francesca, you shall go with me to synagogue if you will. I suppose you've never been in synagogue in your whole life?"

"Why should I?" asked Francesca.

Emanuel stood over the table gravely. He first took the decanter containing sherry, and poured out a glass of wine. Holding this in his hand, he recited certain words in Hebrew. They were the first three verses of the second chapter of the Book of Genesis, called the Sanctification for the Eve of the Sabbath.

This done, he pronounced, also in Hebrew, a benediction on the wine: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has created the fruit of the vine!" He then tasted the wine and poured out a little for the girls. He next repeated the customary grace before meat. Then he brake bread and gave to each. After this the supper began, and was carried on in quite a customary heathen fashion. The order and solemnity of the meal, however, impressed Francesca.

"In some houses"—Emanuel again seemed to read her thoughts—"the prayers and benedictions may become an idle form, a gabble of words, but the form is always there in every Jewish household. While the form remains there remains also the chance of recovering the spirit. Remember, it is by strict exaction of the form that we keep the ignorant and the careless from losing their religion and their nationality. We are kept together by forms which we are forbidden to break through."

"I think you will interest me very much. I have never considered the subject of Judaism at all."

Nelly looked up inquiringly, and turned to Emanuel.

"There were reasons for all the forms which seem to those outside the People vexatious and trifling. You have a serious countenance, Francesca. If you like to converse upon the People at any time, I will tell you such things as may be useful to you. A woman is not expected to know the Law or to obey the Precepts which govern the man."

"That is what they say," said Nelly. "Women are not expected to know the Law. Oh! and how is the Law carried out, as far as the house is concerned, but by the women? What about the forbidden food and the Kosher meat? Are we not to learn the rules about boiling meat and the Separation of the kitchen things, and the unleavened bread and the Passover cakes and the Passover wine? If it were not for women learning all these things, Emanuel, you would have to turn cook and house-keeper yourself."

"Go to synagogue to-morrow," said Emanuel. "Ours is the Spanish synagogue, built in the year 1700, for the congregation of Sephardim—the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, who had come over with Manasseh fifty years before, when Oliver Cromwell gave permission. It is in the City of London. Mark well what is done. Nelly will explain something, I will explain the rest. Re-

member, however, that you are about to witness the most ancient ritual in the world, the most venerable form of worship which exists — a form which has come down through two thousand five hundred years at least of unbroken continuance."

After supper he pronounced the grace after meat and retired.

CHAPTER XVIII

SYNAGOGUE

D'un jour intérieur je me sens éclairé,
Et j'entends une voix qui me dit d'espérer.—*Lamartine.*

"ARE you ready, Francesca?"

Nelly ran lightly down the narrow stairs, dressed for Sabbath and Synagogue. She was dainty and pretty at all times in the matter of dress, but especially on a summer day, which affords opportunity for bright color and bright drapery and an ethereal appearance. This morning she was full of color and light. When, however, she found herself confronted with Francesca's simple gray dress, so closely fitting, so faultless, and her black-lace hat with its single rose for color, Nelly's artistic sense caused her heart to sink like lead. It is not for nothing that one learns and teaches the banjo; one Art leads to another; she who knows music can feel for dress. "Oh!" she cried, clasping her hands. "That's what we can never do!"

"What?"

"That fit! Look at me! Yet they call me clever. Clara gives me the new fashions and I copy them, and the girls in our street copy me—poor things!—and the dress-maker comes to talk things over and to learn from me. I make everything for myself. And they call me clever! But I can't get near it; and if I can't nobody can."

To the male eye she would have seemed dressed as well as her friend—perhaps better. For against Francesca's gray dress with with her black-lace hat Nelly could show a sweet pink summer thing in wool with a pattern in bright-colored flowers worked all over it, and lace about the neck, and a rather large hat with flowers to match, and long tan gloves. Nobody in the street was ever better dressed than Nelly. But she certainly made her frocks herself; and the professional eye, comparing the result with her

companion's frock, would perceive that it presented an amateurish appearance at best.

"Nonsense, Nelly!" said Francesca. "You have got a very pretty frock, and nobody could possibly look nicer in it than you do. As for me, I can make nothing. Why—I am ashamed to confess it—but I have never once in all my life had a needle in my hand. I think you are wonderfully clever to make such a pretty dress all by yourself."

Outside there was nobody in the street to see the Sabbath frock, because all the girls were away at work and the matrons were in the house over the morning work. "See what comes," said Nelly, "of not being like other people! If we kept the Sabbath on a Sunday the street would be full of girls to look at us. It's all a waste."

They took the tram as far as Aldgate, where stand the stately hayricks on wheels. It is a crowded part, thronged with people and with vehicles; but on Saturday there is less crowd than on any other week-day. Nelly crossed the road and plunged into a maze of narrow streets, where every shop and every warehouse was closed.

"Here's where all our People live," said Nelly. "The synagogue is just here."

She turned into an archway on the south side of the street, and led the way into a small paved court. On the east side and south side of it there was a group of buildings. One of them, a large detached structure of red brick, stood east and west, with a flat façade and round windows that bore out the truth of the date—1700—carved upon the front. A word or two in that square character—that tongue—which presents so few attractions to most of us compared with other tongues, probably corroborated the internal evidence of the façade and the windows.

"This is the synagogue," said Nelly. She entered, and turning to the right led the way up-stairs to a gallery running along the whole side of the building. On the other side was another gallery. In front of both was a tolerably wide grill, through which the congregation below could be seen perfectly.

"This is the women's gallery," whispered Nell—there were not many women present. "We'll sit in the front. Presently they will sing. They sing beautifully. Now they're reading prayers and the Law. They've got to read the whole Law through once a

week, you know." Francesca looked curiously through the grill. When one is in a perfectly strange place, the first observations made are of small and unimportant things. She observed that there was a circular enclosure at the east end, as if for an altar; but there was no altar: two doors indicated a cupboard in the wall. There were six tall wax-lights burning round the enclosure, although the morning was fine and bright. At the west end a high screen kept the congregation from the disturbance of those who entered or went out. Within the screen was a company of men and boys, all with their hats and caps on their heads; they looked like the choir. In front of the choir was a platform railed round. Three chairs were placed at the back of the platform. There was a table covered with red velvet, on which lay the book of the Law, a ponderous roll of parchment provided with silver staves or handles. Before this desk or table stood the Reader. He was a tall and handsome man, with black hair and full black beard, about forty years of age. He wore a gown and large Geneva bands, like a Presbyterian minister; on his head he had a kind of biretta. Four tall wax candles were placed round the front of the platform. The chairs were occupied by two or three elders. A younger man stood at the desk beside the Reader. The service was already begun—it was, in fact, half over.

Francesca observed next that all the men wore a kind of broad scarf, made of some white stuff about eight feet long and four feet broad. Bands of black or blue were worked in the ends, which were also provided with fringes. "It is the Talleth," Nelly whispered. Even the boys wore this white robe, the effect of which would have been very good but for the modern hat, tall or pot, which spoiled all. Such a robe wants a turban above it, not an English hat. The seats were ranged along the synagogue east and west. The place was not full, but there were a good many worshippers. The service was chanted by the Reader. It was a kind of chant quite new and strange to Francesca. Like many young persons brought up with no other religion than they can pick up for themselves, she was curious and somewhat learned in the matter of ecclesiastical music and ritual, which she approached, owing to her education, with unbiassed mind. She knew masses and anthems and hymns and chants of all kinds; never had she heard anything of this kind before. It was not congregational, or Gregorian; nor was it repeated by the choir

from side to side; nor was it a monotone with a drop at the end; nor was it a florid, tuneful chant such as one may hear in some Anglican services. This Reader, with a rich, strong voice, a baritone of great power, took nearly the whole of the service—it must have been extremely fatiguing—upon himself, chanting it from beginning to end. No doubt, as he rendered the reading and the prayers, so they had been given by his ancestors in Spain and Portugal generation after generation, back into the times when they came over in Phœnician ships to the Carthaginian colonies, even before the dispersion of the Ten Tribes. It was a traditional chant of antiquity beyond record — not a monotonous chant. Francesca knew nothing of the words; she grew tired of trying to make out whereabouts on the page the Reader might be in the book lent her, which had Hebrew on one side and English on the other. Besides, the man attracted her—by his voice, by his energy, by his appearance. She closed her book and surrendered herself to the influence of the voice and the emotions which it expressed.

There was no music to help him. From time to time the men in the congregation lifted up their voices—not seemingly in response, but as if moved to sudden passion and crying out with one accord. This helped him a little, otherwise he was without any assistance.

A great Voice. The man sometimes leaned over the Roll of the Law, sometimes he stood upright, always his great Voice went up and down and rolled along the roof and echoed along the benches of the women's gallery. Now the Voice sounded a note of rejoicing; now, but less often, a note of sadness; now it was a sharp and sudden cry of triumph. Then the people shouted with him—it was as if they clashed sword on shield and yelled for victory; now it was a note of defiance, as when men go forth to fight an enemy; now it sank to a murmur, as of one who consoles and soothes and promises things to come; now it was a note of rapture, as if the Promised Land was already recovered.

Was all that in the Voice? Did the congregation, all sitting wrapped in their white robes, feel these emotions as the Voice thundered and rolled? I know not. Such was the effect produced upon one who heard this Voice for the first time. At first it seemed loud, even barbaric; there was lacking something which

the listener and stranger had learned to associate with worship. What was it? Reverence? But she presently found reverence in plenty, only of a kind that differed from that of Christian worship. Then the listener made another discovery. In this ancient service she missed the note of humiliation. There was no Litany at a Faldstool. There was no kneeling in abasement; there was no appearance of penitence, sorrow, or the confession of sins. The Voice was as the Voice of a Captain exhorting his soldiers to fight. The service was warlike, the service of a people whose trust in their God is so great that they do not need to call perpetually upon Him for the help and forgiveness of which they are assured. Yes, yes—she thought—this is the service of a race of warriors; they are fighting men; the Lord is their God; He is leading them to battle; as for little sins, and backslidings, and penitences, they belong to the Day of Atonement—which comes once a year. For all the other days in the year battle and victory occupy all the mind. The service of a great fighting people; a service full of joy, full of faith, full of assurance, full of hope and confidence—such assurance as few Christians can understand, and of faith to which few Christians can attain. Perhaps Francesca was wrong; but these were her first impressions, and these are mostly true.

In the body of the synagogue men came late. Under one gallery was a school of boys, in the charge of a graybeard, who, book in hand, followed the service with one eye, while he admonished perpetually the boys to keep still and to listen. The boys grew restless; it was tedious to them—the Voice which expressed so much to the stranger who knew no Hebrew at all was tedious to the children; they were allowed to get up and run into the court outside and then to come back again; nobody heeded their going in and out. One little boy of three, wrapped, like the rest, in a white Talleth, ran up and down the side aisle without being heeded—even by the splendid Beadle with the gold-laced hat, which looked so truly wonderful above the Oriental Talleth. The boys in the choir got up and went in and out just as they pleased. Nobody minded. The congregation, mostly well-to-do men with silk hats, sat in their places, book in hand, and paid no attention.

Under the opposite gallery sat two or three rows of worshippers, who reminded Francesca of Browning's poem of St. John's

Day at Rome. For they nudged and jostled each other; they whispered things; they even laughed over the things they whispered. But they were clad like those in the open part in the Talleth, and they sat book in hand, and from time to time they raised their voices with the congregation. They showed no reverence except that they did not talk or laugh loudly. They were like the children, their neighbors—just as restless, just as uninterested, just as perfunctory. Well, they were clearly the poorer and the more ignorant part of the community. They came here and sat through the service because they were ordered so to do; because, like Passover, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Fast of Atonement, it was the Law of their People.

The women in the gallery sat or stood. They neither knelt nor sang aloud; they only sat when it was proper to sit, or stood when it was proper to stand. They were like the women, the village women, in a Spanish or Italian church, for whom everything is done. Francesca, for the moment, felt humiliated that she should be compelled to sit apart from the congregation, railed off in the women's gallery, to have her religion done for her, without a voice of her own in it at all. So I have heard, indignation sometimes fills the bosom of certain ladies when they reflect upon the fact that they are excluded from the choir and forbidden even to play the organ in their own parish church.

The chanting ceased; the Reader sat down. Then the Choir began. They sang a hymn—a Hebrew hymn—the rhythm and metre were not English; the music was like nothing that can be heard in a Christian Church. "It is the music," said Nelly, "to which the Israelites crossed the Red Sea"—a bold statement, but—why not? If the music is not of Western origin and character, who can disprove such an assertion? After the hymn the prayers and reading went on again.

There came at last—it is a long service, such as we poor weak-kneed Anglicans could not endure—the end. There was a great bustle and ceremony on the platform; they rolled up the Roll of the Law; they wrapped it in a purple velvet cloth; they hung over it a silver breastplate set with twelve jewels for the Twelve Tribes—in memory of the Urim and Thummim. Francesca saw that the upper ends of the staves were adorned with silver pomegranates and with silver bells, and they placed it in the arms of one of those who had been reading the law; then a procession

was formed, and they walked, while the Choir sang one of the Psalms of David—but not in the least like the same Psalm sung in an English Cathedral—bearing the Roll of the Law to the Ark —that is to say, to the cupboard, behind the railing and enclosure at the east end.

The Reader came back. Then with another chanted Prayer—it sounded like a prolonged shout of continued Triumph—he ended his part of the service.

And then the Choir sang the last hymn—a lovely hymn, not in the least like a Christian, or at least an English hymn—a psalm that breathed a tranquil hope and a perfect faith. One needed no words to understand the full meaning and beauty and depth of that hymn.

The service was finished. The men took off their white scarfs and folded them up. They stood and talked in groups for a few minutes, gradually melting away. As for the men under the gallery, who had been whispering and laughing, they trooped out of the synagogue all together. Evidently, to them the service was only a form. What is it, in any religion, but a form, to the baser sort?

The Beadle put out the lights. Nelly led the way down the stairs. Thinking of what the service had suggested to herself—all those wonderful things above enumerated—Francesca wondered what it meant to a girl who heard it every Sabbath morning. But she refrained from asking. Custom too often takes the symbolism out of the symbols and the poetry out of the verse. Then the people begin to worship the symbols and make a fetich of the words. We have seen this elsewhere—in other forms of faith. Outside they found Emanuel. They had not seen him in the congregation, probably because it is difficult to recognize a man merely by the top of his hat.

"Come," he said, "let us look round the place. Afterwards, perhaps, we will talk of our Service. This synagogue is built on the site of the one erected by Manasseh and his friends when Oliver Cromwell permitted them to return to London after four hundred years of exile. They were forced to wear yellow hats at first, but that ordinance soon fell into disuse, like many other abominable laws. When you read about mediæval laws, Francesca, remember that when they were cruel or stupid they were seldom carried into effect, because the arm of the executive was weak.

Who was there to oblige the Jews to wear the yellow hat? The police? There were no police. The people? What did the people care about the yellow hat? When the Fire burned down London, sparing not even the great Cathedral, to say nothing of the Synagogue, this second Temple arose, equal in splendor to the first. At that time all the Jews of London where Sephardim of Spain and Portugal and Italy. Even now there are many of the people here who speak nothing among themselves but Spanish, just as there are Askenazim who speak nothing among themselves but Yiddish. Come with me; I will show you something that will please you."

He led the way into another flagged court, larger than the first. There were stone staircases, mysterious doorways, paved passages, a suggestion of a cloister, an open space or square, and buildings on all sides with windows opening upon the court.

"It doesn't look English at all," said Francesca. "I have seen something like it in a Spanish convent. With balconies and a few bright hangings and black-haired women at the open windows, and perhaps a coat of arms carved upon the wall, it would do for part of a Spanish street. It is a strange place to find in the heart of London."

"You see the memory of the Peninsula. What were we saying yesterday? Spain places her own seal upon everything that belongs to her—people, buildings, all. What you see here is the central Institute of our People, the Sephardim—the Spanish part of our People. Here is our synagogue, here are schools, almshouses, residence of the Rabbi, and all sorts of things. You can come here sometimes and think of Spain, where your ancestors lived. Many generations in Spain have made you—as they have made me—a Spaniard."

They went back to the first court. On their way out, as they passed the synagogue, there came running across the court a girl of fifteen or so. She was bareheaded; a mass of thick black hair was curled round her shapely head; her figure was that of an English girl of twenty; her eyes showed black and large and bright as she glanced at the group standing in the court; her skin was dark; she was oddly and picturesquely dressed in a grayish-blue skirt, with a bright crimson open jacket. The color seemed literally to strike the eye. The girl disappeared under a

doorway, leaving a picture of herself in Francesca's mind—a picture to be remembered.

"A Spanish Jewess," said Emanuel. "An Oriental. She chooses by instinct the colors that her great-grandmother might have worn to grace the triumph of David the King."

CHAPTER XIX

So, friend, your sleep was all your house.—*Robert Browning*

I DON'T know exactly what you want to see," said Nelly next morning. "There can't be anything worth seeing about here. It's mostly hard work going on. That isn't much to see."

"I don't know exactly what I do want to see, unless it is everything. I want to see the busy hive at work; I want—oh, Nell, you can't understand what I mean. I want—I want to feel that things are real."

"Oh, they're real enough, if that's all!" said Nelly, grimly. "Well, I will take you to the busiest place in the whole world. Work? They *couldn't* work harder anywhere if they were to try. And as for pay, times are never anything but hard, I can tell you. Real? Yes, things are real enough. But you shall come and see."

It was Sunday morning. The bells were ringing for church; but on the broad highway along which Nelly led her companion there were few signs of any intention churchward. Sunday morning in the summer invites the residents of this quarter out-of-doors. Sunday evening in the summer calls them to the "Forest," to Dagenham Lake, to North Woolwich, to the River Lea. Sunday morning in the winter invites to prolonged bed. Sunday evening in the winter, I am told, sometimes presents encouraging signs of a churchward revival. The morning was bright; the two girls walked along with the elastic step of youth, and the light and color which the rare summer sunshine puts into every maiden's cheek. To one of them the place was new, and the people and the talk. The wan thin ghosts, born of seclusion and loneliness, had already vanished. Francesca, interested in the new things, had forgotten the hotel window and the Passing Show. She was outside; she was actually one of the show folk; she began to think of herself in connection with the show folk.

"I am going to take you to see my great-grandfather for one thing," Nelly went on. "He's an old, old man—over a hundred. He's the oldest man in the country. Very likely he's the oldest man in the world. Because, you see, many old people think they won't be found out when they clap on ten years or so. But our old man's age is certified by his father's synagogue. There can't be any mistake about it. People come to see him and to talk with him, because he's so old; they think he must be so wise and must know such a lot. Grandfather, who keeps the shop, is seventy-five, though no one would think it to look at him. He says it just makes him young only to look at his old dad; makes him feel that there's five-and-twenty years and more before him yet. Think of being seventy-five, and feeling that there's five-and-twenty years before you! Five-and-twenty years of good business, perhaps. Mind, it's only our People who get like that."

"Is he Clara's great-grandfather too?"

"Oh yes. Uncle Angelo was born over the shop. So was father. But grandfather has never been lucky; while as for Uncle Angelo, everything he touches turns to gold. This way, stick tight to me. There's always a crowd here on Sundays, but they won't hurt you."

The street into which they turned was thronged with people, not, as Francesca at first imagined, in order to do honor to this very old man, but in order to be present at a fair. Except that there were no shows, no dwarfs and giants, no swings, and no blare of trumpets and beat of drums, it was a real old mediæval fair, in which things to sell were set out on stalls or booths along the street—quite a fair after the manner of the ancients. The Fair of Beaucaire, when good King René reigned in the Castle of Tarascon, was just such a fair as this. Perhaps, if one had ever seen the place, it might remind one of Nijnii-Novgorod, or of Leipzig, or of our own Stourbridge Fair. Some of the booths, or stalls, were covered over with awnings, to keep off the rain or the sunshine; some were open, some consisted of shelves loosely laid upon a common carter's cart; some were stronger structures, that could be taken to pieces and put up again. In this universal market everything conceivable was exposed to view. The staple, the most common wares, were things connected with clothing of every kind: piles of men's coats and waistcoats lay

on the stalls; rows of legs invited the purchase of trousers. There were feminine things, frocks of all colors and every material, hats with immense feathers and hats without, bonnets of every style and fashion; ribbons of every hue; there were boots and shoes, masculine and feminine; there were slippers of cloth, green and blue and yellow cloth; there were boys' caps with red and gold decorations; there were smoking-caps in green and blue with gold tassels; there were socks and stockings and woollen shirts —the latter at a shilling each, which should have made beholders weep salt tears at thinking of the sweated women who made them. Then, beside the clothing necessary in this cold climate, there were the things which make the luxuries of life; such as pipes, meerschaum pipes—sham meerschaum with sham amber mouthpieces; cigar-holders in the same sham material; there was sham jewelry of the coarsest and commonest kind; bracelets, necklaces, brooches in sham gold with sham stones, glass rubies, glass emeralds, and diamonds of more than doubtful paste. There were, again, stalls for the sale of knives, forks, tools of all kinds; there were tables laid out with what looked at first like useless bits of scrap-iron broken small; there were pictures, mostly the tawdry rubbish, colored or plain, that is kindly exported from Germany, for the more speedy destruction of whatever artistic understanding that may be feebly struggling for life in the brains of the people. These pictures were framed in that beautiful and costly material known, I believe, as Dutch gilt or Dutch metal. Somebody buys these pictures; one may see them in village inns; I believe that they are taken round the country by vans; I have even found them in sea-side lodgings. There were stalls for selling account-books, pens, paper, pencils. There was second-hand furniture exposed for sale, but of a kind which showed the extreme poverty of the young couple who would set up house with such a miserable collection of sticks—chairs that looked as if they would fall to pieces if a child sat on them, rickety tables which even when on view could not hold themselves upright, and wooden beds tied up in dirty bundles. Then there were stalls with things to eat — fish, sweets, cakes. And there was one stall on which were exposed for sale hundreds of photographs of beauteous maidens, for the most part in tights, smiling upon the swain inflammable who gazed upon them, and longed for innumerable pennies so that he might buy them all.

The stalls were arranged in a double and sometimes a triple row, with gangways between them, so that there was a multiple stream of purchasers and spectators continually flowing past them. The shops, to which many of the stalls belonged, were all open, and business seemed brisk in every one. The gangways were crammed with people; some came to buy; some came to look on, some might buy or not, as they were in the mood, or as they were tempted; all of them came to enjoy the life of it, the bustle of it, the gayety of it. Those who sold were all—or nearly all—Jews. But among those who walked in the street there were as many Christians as Jews; most likely a good many more, because nowhere can the Sunday morning be spent in more enjoyable fashion than at this fair held weekly all the year round.

"Nice place, isn't it?" said Nelly, to whom the scene offered no novelty. "Nice place for a young lady like you to come to, isn't it? Don't be afraid. Nobody will hurt you here; but look out for your pockets, you might lose your purse in the crowd. That's the worst that can happen. There's Christian thieves about. But you're among our People, here."

Francesca paused to look about her; the crowd, in fact, stopped at this point, with one consent, to look at the antics of a Cheap Jack, who had got a pair of house-maid's steps, and standing on the highest step but one, was exhibiting his wares and proclaiming their merits in a cascade of words full, strong, and without intermission. Whether he put on a great coat and turned round in it to point out its graceful folds, or whether he punched and pulled it to show the extraordinary strength of the material, the fellow never stopped talking for one moment. He was a true actor. Perched on his steps, he was not a tradesman, he was a benefactor; he was distributing blessings, not waistcoats; his face beamed with goodness; he had no thought of money; he was among friends; he made quips and jests for them; he received their gentle chaff, and gave it back strengthened, barbed, improved. The language, it is true, was rough; he did not disdain to employ any adjective, however strong, if it helped the sense, or rounded a period, or emphasized his meaning. The people below stood with upturned faces, each with a broad grin upon it—a broad grin and an open mouth.

"All that noise," said Nelly, "all that shouting and pretending, for a few shillings! It is all he will make this morning.

They are very badly off. I know the people. Yet he looks jolly with it. That is because it is the only enjoyment he has in the week—to get up on those steps and make a Tom Fool of himself. Let's go on."

Francesca noticed that some of the stalls were kept by single men—or a man and woman—of poor and wretched appearance, pasty-faced, anxious-eyed, who offered their wares silently in the midst of the Babel.

"They cannot speak English yet," Nelly explained. "So many have come here of late from Poland or Russia. It's a dreadful thing for everybody else. Surely we were crowded enough already. Thousands have come over to run down the wages of our People. Oh, it's too bad! Our Board of Guardians are at their wits' end. Yet what were they to do? Where were they to go? Poor things! Don't they look miserable? And they are so poor—oh, so poor and destitute, and so close to starving! Francesca, if you've got your purse with you, buy something—buy this pair of slippers." She took up a pair made of bright blue cloth. "You will never wear them—but never mind—look at this poor woman." The woman, pale and thin, turned her sorrowful eyes upon the speaker, of whose tongue she understood not one word. "Is it her fault that she is a Jewess? What has she done that she should be driven out of her country—Russia is her country, as much as England is mine? What has she done—this poor creature? Oh! It will be visited upon the Russians. The Lord will smite them, and that soon. You will see, you will see." All the suppressed passion of her race broke out suddenly in Nelly's flashing eyes. "The world shall see! No good ever came yet of persecuting the People. Emanuel says so. What has befallen Spain? Oh, we shall see! Come, Francesca, will you have the slippers?"

Francesca chose two pairs, and gave her purse to Nelly, who completed the transaction.

"There," she said, with a little sigh. "This day they will eat. They can now pay the rent of their room, and they will eat. They don't eat every day, unless it is a crust of bread. Do you think you know anything about poverty—you?"

"You spoke to them. Do you know their language? Is it Russian?"

"No, they talk Yiddish. More than half the people here talk

Yiddish. Sometimes Yiddish is Hebrew and German, sometimes it's Hebrew and Polish, sometimes it's Hebrew and Russian, sometimes Hebrew and Lettish. Theirs is Hebrew and Polish. I know a little of it. You can't come much into Middlesex Street without learning something of it. You want reality, Francesca—well—learn Yiddish, and talk to these people."

Francesca turned to look once more at the hapless pair. A wan smile played upon the pale cheek of the man. The woman, while she arranged her poor cheap wares—those gaudy slippers—watched the man with tender solicitude; her eyes resting on him; her very attitude showing her devotion to her poor, starving helpmate. She forgot that the woman could not understand a word of English.

"Oh!" she cried, "can love comfort even you?"

"She doesn't understand," said Nelly. She said something in Yiddish. The woman took her husband's hand, and smiled, and said a few words in reply. "She is happy with her husband," Nelly translated. "Why not? Man and woman are made for each other. There is nothing else." She looked at Francesca, wondering, for the tears stood in her eyes. What was there to cry about? One starving couple? Then, in these parts, tears must be plentiful. "There is nothing else in life—only love," Nelly repeated.

They passed a little shop where feathers—ostrich feathers, large, bright-colored feathers, and small dainty feathers—were in the window. The shop was very small; the window was old-fashioned, with small panes of glass; the floor was two steps below the level of the street. The shop was full of girls, all talking together as loud as they could, and a woman behind the counter was talking with them at the top of her voice—wonderful that so much noise should be made in such a little shop! Outside the door stood the proprietor—a little man, fat and well nourished, dressed in good broadcloth, with a silk hat. He was smoking a very large cigar, and he had a word to exchange with every one who went into his shop or came out of it, or stopped to look in the window.

"Why," he cried—it was a rich, full voice, with a good deal of the racial "brogue" in it; "if it isn't actually Nelly! How are you, Nelly, my dear? It isn't often you come here of a Sunday morning. How's your father, my dear? And how's business?

Step in, my dear"—he addressed a girl who stopped. "Step in; hats and bonnets, my dear, this morning—hats and bonnets—lovely! Such a show you never saw before! Step in and see for yourself."

"I haven't seen father for a good bit. But he's always away this time of year. How are you, Lewis?"

"Is there anything in my way this morning, Nelly?" Here he observed her companion, and instantly recognized the hat she wore. "My!" he cried. "What a hat! Oh! WHAT a hat!!! There's nothing in here, Nelly—nothing at all—that your friend could so much as look at with such a hat as that upon her head. It's Truck, that's what is in there," he whispered; "Truck, compared with such a hat," he gasped, "such—SUCH A HAT! But there! it's good enough for them. WHAT a hat!" He kept returning to Francesca's hat, the sight of which in that street, and at that time, filled him with amazement. For, you see, he knew ladies' hats and ladies' bonnets, and everything that belongs to ladies' costumes. "It's all Truck, in there," he repeated; "don't look at it. Not but what if you come along some Sundays there might be something better. To-day it's hats and bonnets, next Sunday something else. Always something new. Another surprise every week. That's the way, isn't it, Nell? My word, though, WHAT a hat! You come next Sunday, Nell, and bring your friend, and she'll see what I shall have to show. I say, miss, if you don't know the inside of Madame Clotilde's, in New Bond Street, my name is not Lewis Lazarus. And Peter Robinson—unless it was Marshall and Snelgrove—had something to say, I reckon, to that frock, if I know things when I see them. What a lovely hat! Two guineas that hat cost if it ever cost a penny! Two guineas! Oh, I know Clotilde's hats!" He sighed as at a vision of the Unattainable. "Come next Sunday, Nell! How's the old man?"

"We are going to see him directly. Is that Rebecca in the shop?"

"There she is, my dear. All the week, while I'm getting ready for the Sunday sale, she stays at home and keeps house. Little Isaac keeps shop then—but, bless you! there's no takings all the week. Middlesex Street only wakes up on Sunday morning. Then Rebecca comes here and sells the goods, while I stand outside and pull 'em in. That's a Most lovely Hat, miss.

Nelly, you'll find the old man chirpier than ever. Last night he came down as soon as shop was opened after Sabbath, and smoked his pipe in the shop with all the people looking on. It must be a great comfort for him to see everybody looking on. A BEAUTIFUL HAT! Smoked the pipe through, he did, and knocked the ashes out on his thumb-nail before they took him up-stairs again. There's a man for you!"

"We'll come on Sunday next, Lewis—perhaps."

"Well, and about that lovely Hat. It's much too good for us here; they'd say it wasn't fine enough, but I know what it cost. See, miss, if you care to think of it, I've got a little brooch of pearls. Oh, most beautiful pearls! I think we could make a swop. I don't know what you gave for it, but I know what Madame Clotilde got for that hat. Two guineas was not above the mark, I should say, when that hat was first bought."

Nelly nodded and laughed, and drew Francesca away. "We'll talk about the hat another time," she said. "He is my cousin," she explained, when they were out of hearing. "Lewis is my mother's nephew. He does very well; though, to look at him on a Sunday morning, with his beautiful clothes and his cigar, you would think he had nothing on his mind at all. The whole week through he's at work, buying cheap for the Sunday market, and contriving and inventing all the time, though you'd think he did nothing but get fat and talk to the girls. He knows what people want, you see. That's his secret. Oh! He gives it away. 'Find out what they want,' he says, 'and give it.' That's all the secret. Don't persuade 'em. Don't teach 'em. Give 'em what they want. And the money they take in that little shop would surprise you. He'd like to get that hat of yours for his pearl brooch, I dare say. But he sha'n't. Cousin Lewis is desperately sharp and clever. But he sha'n't get over you, Francesca. Not that you want his pearl brooch."

At this point they were stopped by the crowd. Francesca looked around. Just at this point the people seemed to be all talking that strange, soft foreign tongue that Nelly called Yiddish —and it was a dreadful, a terrible crowd to look at. The men were stunted and dwarfed, pasty-faced, narrow-shouldered, hollow-chested. They were mostly young, but there was no spring of life in their appearance, or in their faces; they were joyless faces; they were dull eyes; they looked, as they were, half-starved.

"You can do nothing, Francesca," said Nelly. "You needn't look at them like that. You can do nothing at all. These are the poor creatures come over here to drive low wages lower. They've all got wives, because they marry at eighteen, and the women are worse off than the men. You can do nothing. Oh, Francesca, what's the use of crying over them?"

CHAPTER XX

Good old Chronicle,
Thou hast so long walked hand in hand with time.
Troilus and Cressida

THE crowd dispersed a little, and they went on. "Here's the place," said Nelly, "and here's grandfather."

It was a second-hand furniture shop; in front a few things had been put out on the curb, things apparently calculated to deter people from looking any closer. The shop itself was full of sticks of all kinds. The proprietor stood at the door, looking over the heads of the people. He was a fine tall man, his black hair graying but not yet gray, apparently about fifty years of age; a man of somewhat haughty appearance, he looked as if he would disdain to harangue the multitude, or to invite them to buy his goods. This was the unsuccessful grandfather parent of Angelo the wealthy. The crowd went up and down, but no one seemed to enter his shop.

"Well, grandfather," said Nelly, "how are you? I've brought a friend to see the old man. How is he?"

"He keeps up wonderful, Nell. Glad to see you, miss. Take your friend up-stairs, my dear. He went out in a hansom cab for an hour the day before yesterday; Rachel went with him; and he smoked his pipe down here in the shop when we opened last night, and drank a glass of beer afterwards for all the world to see. Wonderful! That's what they all say. Now, if every one that stopped to look at that old man yesterday had planked down a shilling for the show, a ten-pound note wouldn't have bought the money. Run up, Nell."

The first floor front was the family best room. Here, in a chair with a high back and shoulders as well as arms—a chair designed to keep off draughts—sat an old—old—very ancient man. Never a tall man, his figure was shrunken to the dimensions of an ordinary boy of twelve, so that for comfort he kept both feet on a high footstool, and had cushions at the back and sides of the chair for padding and support.

There was a small fire burning in the grate, though the day was as warm as one can expect in July, and the windows were shut, which was as well, considering the noise in the street below. The old man lay back in the chair, his eyes closed, half asleep. He wore a cap of green cloth with a gold tassel, which looked as if it belonged to one of the young men outside with a booth, rather than to this ancient one. But he still loved color—a bit of color and brightness. On the table beside him lay a Hebrew Bible, open, with a pair of spectacles upon the page; a clay pipe was also on the table. Two girls sat with him in the room sewing some stuff, which looked as if it was intended for the cover of a chair or sofa. The girls looked up, smiled a welcome, nodded, pointed to the old man in the chair, and held up warning forefingers. They were pleasant girls to look at, not unlike Nelly herself—small of stature, with calm and serious faces, housewifely, trustworthy, industrious, what we call, when we are very serious, *good* faces.

"Is he asleep?" whispered Nelly. "Some day he'll go off like this, in his sleep, from weakness."

"He won't go off for want of support," said one of the girls. "We watch him—he is never left alone; we give him food all day long—little and often. He nods and dozes for a bit, then he wakes up lively again. He's always like that."

"Look at him, Francesca," said Nell. They bent over the chair. The old man lay like a child, breathing so lightly that only by the gentle rise and fall of his chest one could tell that he breathed at all. His face was less wrinkled than one would expect at so great an age; but the cheeks had fallen in and raised the cheek bones, and given greater prominence to a long and straight nose; his eyebrows were bushy; he wore neither beard nor mustache; on his deeply sunken lips hovered still the survival of the seal of his race: that seal which never leaves the lips of the Hebrew.

"Look at him," said Nell; "he was born in the year 1789, a hundred and three years ago. Perhaps he is the oldest man in the world. At all events, he's the oldest man in this country, and he's my great-grandfather."

"He looks terribly old," Francesca murmured. "Is it any happiness to live so long, after all that one has loved have gone?"

"Why, he loves his children, and his grandchildren, and his

great-grandchildren. Rachel and Milly here—my cousins—are with him all day long to look after him. He can read his Hebrew Bible with spectacles; he eats and drinks well, and he's naturally proud of being so old. It's like standing on a tower above all the rest of the world, and we're naturally proud of him. All that makes him happy. All he wants now is to keep on living, and I'm sure I hope he will."

"He's as happy," said Rachel, "as a man can be, except for a little weakness. He can't do things as he used to, of course, and sometimes he groans a little, because he never could make any money. I tell him that the Lord doesn't bestow all His gifts on one man. To grandfather, here—we call him grandfather for short—the Lord has given health, and long life, and many descendants; grandsons who have prospered and grown rich, like Uncle Angelo, and daughters and granddaughters to work for their husbands, and all. Oh, he has had great, great gifts! He must not think of grumbling."

"All the same," said Nelly, "he has been very unlucky in his money matters. We must own that. Some men touch a sixpence and it turns into half a crown. As for this poor old man, when he touched a sixpence, which wasn't often, it turned into a penny. He's lived in the house where father and grandfather and everybody was born for seventy years and more, always with his shop open all the time and little in it, and no money taken. There's been time enough for some men to make half a dozen fortunes. But there! as Rachel said, we can't expect everything. He's had his share in other ways—a good deal more than his share. But he never could make any money."

"Nor grandfather either," said Rachel, "nor father, for that matter. Uncle Angelo's got the luck of the whole family, and your own father, Nelly—"

"Oh, father is up one day and down the next. He doesn't mind much. He likes the ups and the downs too. When he's up he enjoys himself—it's champagne all day then. When he's down he waits till he gets up again. Hush! There he is awake again."

In the middle of this girl's chatter the old man opened his eyes and raised his head and looked about him. Perceiving the presence of a stranger, he straightened himself feebly, and waited to be addressed.

"Well, grandfather," said Nelly, "you remember me, don't you?"

"Aye, aye—you are Nelly; they call you Nelly; but you are Preciada—Preciada. It was my own mother's name. That's a long time ago, though—a very long time ago since my mother died; eighty years ago."

"This is my friend, Francesca, come to see you."

The old man nodded and lifted his heavy eyes. Then a strange thing happened; for upon his face there fell suddenly a glory as of sunshine, and he sat upright in his chair, strong and straight, clutching the arms with his long bony fingers. "It is Francesca!" he cried. "Oh, it is—it is Francesca! You have come to see me again after all these years. I thought you dead long ago—dead. I haven't seen you, cousin Francesca, for eighty years and more, and now you have come again. Oh! my sweet cousin—my dear cousin—my pretty cousin—not changed a bit, not a bit"—it was strange to hear such words of endearment from this poor old withered wreck with his shaking voice—"always the same beautiful girl—the same beautiful girl. Ah! but they didn't know it—they couldn't guess. There were no Venetian beauties outside the Ghetto to compare with those within! We kept them within. They never showed their faces outside."

"He remembers something," whispered Nelly. "You have reminded him of his young days, Francesca. I have never seen him like this before. Why, he looks fifty years younger!"

"His mind wanders now and then," Rachel explained. "It is strange, though. He has gone back ever so many years. There's a something in your friend's face that reminds him of some girl he loved. To be sure, she is one of the Sephardim herself. She is one of Us."

Francesca thought it needless to keep on explaining that she was a Spanish Moor.

"It isn't your cousin Francesca, grandfather," Nelly cried. "It's my friend, Francesca Elveda."

"No, no; it's Francesca Albu. Always pretty and sweet, cousin Francesca. Doves' eyes are within her looks—her lips are like a thread of scarlet. A garden enclosed—a spring shut up—a fountain sealed, is my cousin—my Francesca."

"I suppose," Nelly whispered, "it's some girl he loved. Dead she must be long ago. You must be like her, Francesca. Strange that you should have her name!"

The old man went on murmuring; then his eyes dropped. He was conscious, in some vague way, that he was mixing up the past with the present. The girl's face brought back the past so vividly that he thought it was his cousin herself, still in her lovely youth. He was confused. A man so ancient has little hold of the present. So he shut his eyes and waited till the vision of the past should disappear.

In a few moments he opened his eyes again. He had come back to the present. It was only a modern young lady he saw now, not his cousin, Francesca Albu, at all.

"Ah!" he said, smiling faintly. "It does an old man good to see a lovely face. Just now you almost reminded me of my cousin, Francesca; she must be long since dead and gone. Ah! and old and toothless, too, before she went, I dare say, poor thing! You've got her face, though—her face. You are exactly like her. What is your name, my dear?"

"Francesca Elveda."

"Yes, one of Us. I have heard something about the Elvedas. Where? Never mind. I shall remember some time, I dare say. When you get to a hundred—"

"A hundred and three, grandfather," said Rachel.

"A hundred and nearly four," the old man went on, proudly, "you remember a surprising number of things."

"Tell the young lady about the Grand Army," said Rachel.

"I remember Venice very well." The old man was not to be hurried; he was working his way to the Grand Army. "I remember the city where I was born. My cousin Francesca was born there, too—my cousin Francesca—oh, so fair and sweet. I remember Francesca. We were not Italian Jews. They've got softer voices than we who come from Spain. We were in Spain for two thousand years; we went there before the time of the Maccabees. Oh, ours is a very ancient family. We've had great men in our family in the old time. But I was born in Venice."

"I have been to Venice," said Francesca, softly. "I know its canals and its palaces."

"But you don't know the Ghetto."

"Yes, I have seen the Ghetto, though there are no longer Jews in it."

"I was born there. It was a narrow kind of place to live in, I remember. We had to live there. But the French Revolution

[See page 154

"EMANUEL HAD BROUGHT HIS WORK-TABLE INTO THE GARDEN"

came. Children, if we remembered the Ghetto as we ought, we should add another to the Hundred Benedictions, and one more prayer to the Eighteen, in order to praise the Lord for the French Revolution which threw down the walls and let us out. I remember when the French came into Venice—what year was it? I forget. I was a boy of ten or eleven. First we thought there would be nothing but ruin and more misery for us. We hadn't much, but we should lose our all. Well, there was no disaster at all for us, but quite the contrary, for the Ghetto was thrown open. Blessed art Thou"—he held up his hands as one who prays—"O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who settest the people free! For that I have always loved the French."

"Do you remember Napoleon Bonaparte?"

"I saw him then—Napoleon the Great, who overthrew the Kings and opened the Ghettos all over the world, and set the People free. I saw him then and I saw him afterwards—twice I saw him. There was never any man like him. Sometimes I am sorry that I brought so much bad-luck upon him; but it was not my fault."

"Oh! But how could you, a simple boy, bring bad-luck to so great a general?"

"I don't know. Bad-luck comes in many ways. We can't always keep it off. And he was a Gentile and unprotected. There are no charms to protect the Gentiles. Some people never have any good-luck for themselves, and bring bad-luck to everybody they keep company with. I was one of those persons, though I knew it not."

"What makes you think that you brought bad-luck to Napoleon?"

"It wasn't by intending it. I didn't know it; I only found it afterwards. Yes, yes—I didn't know. I thought the French the greatest people in the world. And so, when I was eighteen, I joined their army. Not to fight. No! not to fight. I had a cask of brandy and a handcart for all my possessions, and I followed the army with these. Oh! for a man born to be lucky it was an excellent way to begin. After a bit the cask became a wagon. I thought I was going to make my fortune. That was my thought, not to bring bad-luck on Napoleon at all—not at all; why should I?—but only to make money. As for my brother, he went to Spain, and there after a time joined the British Army in the same way, and got on fast, and took contracts and grew

rich—rich—oh, so rich! Well, why did he get rich, and why did I keep poor? He had luck, and I had none."

"So," said Francesca, "you were a camp-follower to the French Army, and you brought bad-luck upon it. Did you ever see any battles?"

"Battles? Why, child, I was with the Grand Army. I went to Moscow with the Grand Army, and I came back with all that there was left of it. Napoleon never had any bad-luck at all till I brought along my wagon-load of brandy. Oh, what a disaster! Never in the world was there such a disaster!" He stopped to shake his head.

"He will talk about that all day long, sometimes," said Rachel; "his mind gets full of blood and slaughter and starvation when he talks about that time."

"What an army that was!" he went on. "Five hundred thousand men, with their artillery and their baggage wagons and their horses! Austrians and Italians, Germans, Poles, and French, all in the same army. What an army! I came, after walking along beside my own wagons filled with stuff for the thirsty soldiers. Oh! I did very well, I can tell you, very well—very well—all the way to Moscow. As for the camp-followers, they were there by tens of thousands. They sold drink, like me; they came with music and singing, and they ran over the battle-fields when the victory was won, and robbed the dead. But on the way back they all got starved or shot, and the money they'd made was carried off by the Cossacks. It is a long time to remember, eighty years ago. I must be the last man living who went to Moscow with the Grand Army and got home again. As for my beautiful wagons and my horses and my money, everything was lost at Beresina, where we lost so many thousands of men. Everybody knows how many soldiers were killed, but nobody stopped to count the dead camp-followers. After Beresina there was no more order. Napoleon left us. There were no longer any officers. The men fell down and were frozen to death. We fought for food; we devoured horse-flesh; we burned whole houses to keep us from being frozen. We were so wretched that the enemy disdained to make us prisoners. It was sufficient for them that we were flying from their territory. Some of their soldiers went mad with the cold and the starvation. What a time it was! What cold! What privations! What misery! Napoleon

never recovered from that disaster. He was ruined, and so was I. Yes, children, if the Grand Army had been successful I should have been a rich man, and you should be all great ladies."

"And then you would never have lived so long as this," said Rachel; "because you can't expect to get everything."

"Perhaps not, child. But my wagons—my beautiful wagons! I got them safely as far as Beresina, and there I had to leave them. My beautiful wagons! Only think. They were loaded—not with brandy any longer, but with gold and silver cups, chains of gold, boxes full of gold, and rings, and precious stones. Some I had got for myself when we pillaged Moscow. Most of the things I bought of the soldiers for drinks of brandy. A diamond brooch for a couple of glasses; a diamond ring for another glass; a gold cup for its contents in brandy. And all—all—all had to be left. That was the bitterest moment of my life—to leave my all behind me—to have to exchange my fortune for my life." He shook his head mournfully.

"We can't have everything, grandfather," repeated Rachel the Comforter. "See what a splendid long life you've had, and think what you can remember!"

"Oh, it is wonderful," said Francesca, "to talk with a man who was actually in the Grand Army!"

"Yes; I've helped to sack Moscow. And I saw Napoleon when he began the Retreat. He looked stern and hard; for he knew what was before him. We didn't know, and I thought I should get my wagons home as safely as I had brought them. I thought the French were invincible. Aye! I remember the burning of the city—oh yes—and the soldiers running about everywhere. I remember," he dropped his head, and was silent for a few moments—"I remember that day very well indeed. Down in the tombs of the Czars we found a young lady—a sweet and innocent young thing she was—frightened wellnigh to death. We did her no harm, but we took her to one of our Generals. Afterwards I saw her in the Retreat—all in rags—barefooted and frost-bitten. Her long hair flying wild—her poor face haggard. I saw her flying with the soldiers. I saw her fall headlong in the snow. We swept past and left her there to die. Poor thing! Poor thing! They all died—all of them—they all fell down—those poor things—in the ice and snow and died. And nobody pitied them, because we were all flying for

our lives. Poor thing! When we found her she was a pretty thing."

Francesca shuddered and changed the subject.

"You remember Waterloo, as well?"

"Yes—oh yes. I was there. I had gone back to the cask and the handcart. I saw Napoleon the day before the battle, and I knew how it would go, because his face was like the face with which he left us after Beresina. Disaster was written upon it. Disaster and defeat. I trembled, thinking of my cask—the only thing between me and destitution. There was another dreadful misfortune! Napoleon fled when it was all over, and the British troops rode over the cart and all, and I had to fly for my life. So there was an end of Napoleon, and of me, too, so far as the army went. I went soldiering no more—to be sure there was no more soldiering to speak of—and so I came over here, and got this shop, and here I've been ever since. Oh, I could tell you a great deal more about the Grand Army. Come and see me again and ask me questions—I remember the King of Naples and all the other Kings and Marshals and Generals. Come again, children, and talk to me—I like talking. At a hundred and nearly four, there isn't much left except to talk now and then."

"Is he tired? Shall we go?" for the old man closed his eyes again.

"No," said Rachel; "let him rest for a moment, that is all; then ask him more questions. We think it does him good to talk and think. If he stops long without talking he becomes lethargic, and that isn't good for him."

Francesca looked round the room. It was crammed full of furniture of all kinds. On a sideboard there were three or four great glass bowls as big as punch-bowls; there was a cabinet in a corner which would have looked well in a West End House—her mother's house. On the walls hung family portraits which might have been used to illustrate the Art of Photography from the earliest times—the epoch of the great Daguerre—to these modern days. It looked like a place in which there had been a long accumulation of the things which the unbroken family life heaps up. Here the women had worked, as these girls were now working, for eighty years, always youth and age, children and grandchildren. Down-stairs the surviving son stood in the family shop to sell the furniture; within, the quiet family life, humble and

harmless; outside, the noisy, brawling crowd. All this going on from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, with no change other than the slow approach of age, a birth and a death, the departure of a daughter from the rule of her father to the rule of her husband.

"I've been in this same house"—the old man opened his eyes again and took up the thread of his discourse—"ever since I came here in 1815. I borrowed the money of my brother to set me up. That's the last I ever saw of my brother. He was in great luck. He made a most wonderful great fortune. I came here in 1815. The quartern loaf was one and elevenpence farthing, and tea was fifteen shillings a pound. Oh, I remember well! Here I married. And I've had sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, great-grandsons and great-granddaughters. Some of them have grown old and died. But I remain. And I remember everything. Oh, I am so old—so old—so old!" He feebly rubbed his hands and chuckled.

"Don't mind asking him questions," said Nelly. "He's wide-awake now."

What could this old man remember since 1815, compared with what he remembered before that date? What event would such a man, living in such a street, carrying on such a trade, in a way so humble and so obscure, be likely to remember? But Francesca asked him timidly if he took any part in politics.

He shook his head. "No; politics were not for me. I hadn't a vote at all till I was past seventy. Besides, I had my business to attend to. No politics for me. But I remember," he said, "when the first Jew was made Sheriff of London; he was David Salomons—afterwards Lord Mayor of London. That was thought a great day for us. And I remember when Sir Moses Montefiore was made a knight. That was thought a great day. And I remember when our People were admitted to the House of Commons. But no politics for me; no, no."

"Have you forgotten your old language—the Venetian talk?" Francesca spoke to him a few words of that soft *patois*.

But the old man shook his head. "We used to speak like that, I remember. But I cannot tell what you are saying. It is eighty years and more since I heard that language."

Francesca desisted. What could the old man have to remember? Nothing but the little life of the crowded street, with the

hopes and anxieties of the small trader; nothing, except for his brief and adventurous experiences as a camp-follower, and the bad-luck that he brought upon the unfortunate Emperor and Conqueror, to whose army he attached himself and his misfortunes. Nothing but the little mean life among the *petites gens* low down in the world. No art, no literature, no culture, nothing that makes the higher and the nobler life. What could he remember—this poor old man? Even a daily paper had not been one of his necessities. What could he remember that was worth inquiring into?

Do you know how, at some moments, the words we use seem not to be ordered in the usual fashion, by brain and will, but by some outside influence? This happened at this moment to Francesca.

"You are a very old man," said Francesca. "Your life, since you came here, has been happy, in spite of your ill-luck?"

"Surely—surely. To live is happiness. Thank God, I have always been happy."

"What has made you happy? You have had no success in your business, such as you call success. You wanted to make money, as your brother had done, and you could not. You should have been unhappy."

The old man pointed to the girls. "They have made me happy," he said. "These girls and their mother and their grandmother and their great-grandmother, have made my happiness. The man does the work, and the woman makes the happiness. The man makes the money, and the woman spends it for him. All the happiness is made by the women at home for the men who work."

"He's always been a stay-at-home," said Rachel. "Never happy except in his own chair, with us about him."

"The woman always obedient to the man." Francesca made this foolish remark because of the dispute that was continually going on in her brain. It was, however, ill-timed and out of place. She repented the next moment. For before her eyes there arose a vision of four generations—a dozen families, all glorified and made happy by the women who took their place in the household lower than the men yet without rebellion—all made happy by the women. These four generations might stand for all the generations since the world began, this being the

Divine Order according to these simple people. They were quite humble; they were quite poor; but their lives were made happy for them by the devotion of the women — mothers and wives, and daughters and granddaughters. As were these, so were thousands upon thousands around her. Francesca thought of the half-starved people who could speak no English, and sold their blue and green cloth slippers; she remembered the look of dependence one upon the other. It takes but a moment of time to think of these things. Her heart was touched; her eyes filled.

The girl Rachel looked up surprised at the remark and at the humid eyes of the speaker. "Obedient?" she asked. "Why should we not be obedient? What happiness can there be for a woman except to obey her husband or her father? You wouldn't, surely, expect us to work for ourselves, would you?"

"No, no; I only meant—"

"When we all work for each other we are all happy. You ought to know—you—that our People make the happiest families in the world. Why? Because everything is ordered with us according to the Law of the Lord. The father rules, and the wife and children obey. Christians are miserable because they will not acknowledge the Law. Yet it was meant for them as well as for us—for us first, for them afterwards. And as for this dear old man, what would we not all do to keep him alive and happy?"

Francesca got up. "Thank you," she said to the Patriarch; "I hope that you will live many years—yet—many years," she repeated, taking his hand—"many years in full possession of all your faculties, and with your great-granddaughters around you to keep you happy."

"Ah!" His face lit up, and he pulled himself upright. "If it please God. If it please God. There is nothing like long life, is there? Come again, my dear. You are like my cousin—you are like Francesca—my cousin, Francesca Albu, whom I left at Venice —my cousin—so lovely and so sweet. Ah! I was young then. I loved her—and you—you—you are like her." His eyes closed and his head dropped.

CHAPTER XXI

I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace.
Taming of the Shrew.

"It doesn't seem right to be calling you plain Francesca," said Nelly, washing up the cups and saucers in the morning after this visit to the Patriarch.

"Oh! But why not?"

"Because you are so rich, you know, and we are such little people."

"Nonsense. Let me help you with the tea things, Nelly. To think that this is the first time I have ever washed a cup and saucer in my life, and you've been doing it, I suppose, every day! Now, then, I will take these cups—so—and Nell—Nelly—it's such a pretty name, isn't it? Fancy our living here in the house together and calling each other Miss. Miss Bernard, may I wash another cup for you? Besides, I hate the word Miss. Why are the English names so ugly? Mister—Mistress—Missis—Miss? No wonder the English people are so fond of titles! One would give a great deal to escape being Miss or Missis. I should like to be Lady Francesca. I think, as I never mean to marry, I shall go back to our old Spanish way, and call myself Señorita until I am thirty, and then I will become Señora."

Francesca was animated and interested. She spoke with a return to the old cheerfulness based on a certain personal dignity which never left her. She belonged to that class of women—perhaps the highest and best—who can be cheerful, but are never childishly light-hearted. The frivolities of conversation or of life attract them not. Even in early maidenhood, when life is fullest of enjoyment, they are never carried out of themselves.

"We are Spanish, too," said Nelly. "And Nelly is not my proper name. Most of us have names which we do not use. But, of course, you have heard. My true name is Preciada—Preciada Albu."

"Oh! Preciada. The old man called you Preciada yesterday. I thought it was a term of endearment. What a pretty name! The Señorita Preciada Albu! Why don't you write up the name on your window card instead of Miss Bernard? Preciada! Yes, I know the name."

"Clara's real name is Polisa, the Lady. That is pretty, too. I wonder what yours is."

"Plain Francesca. Nothing more."

Nelly shook her head doubtfully. "They ought to have told you," she said. "They've told you nothing. Shall I tell you some other names? I think no people have such pretty names as our People. There is Leucha, which is Leah, you know; and Reyna, the Queen. Clara tells me that you have a servant named Melkah, which is the same thing. They turn Melkah into Amelia and Milly and Emily. Just in the same way they turn Beyt-Shevah, which the Christians call Bathsheba, into Betsy and Bessy and Bess. But that is chiefly among the Poles and Germans. Then, some of our girls are called Estella, Oro, Perla, Luna; you couldn't possibly have more loving names, could you? Because, you see, though there is no rejoicing when a girl is born among us, our fathers are just as fond of their girls as any other fathers."

"It is a very pretty custom. But again, why do you call yourself Nelly Bernard instead of Preciada Albu?"

"I don't know why. A great many of the People trade and live under assumed names. I suppose, because in the old times there was so much hatred and persecution. Father won't call himself on the Turf by his own name, and he wouldn't like me to put the true name on my door. It doesn't matter, and there is something pleasant and mysterious in having your true name behind. It's like being a noble lord in disguise, isn't it?"

"Perhaps. Now the breakfast things are washed and put away"—they were kept in the cupboard—"what are you going to do next?"

"Well, if you are to have any dinner to-day I must go and look after it. I thought of a beefsteak pie, if you could fancy it. You could? Then I must go and make it."

"Oh!" The maiden of many hotels stared. "You make—you really make—yourself, your own things to eat? Nell, I have never in my life seen anything made. May I look on?"

"Never seen anything made? Why, how in the world—don't rich people have kitchens? Don't you look after your servants?"

"No; somebody else does that. We have a house-keeper, too. In hotels I suppose there is a steward or somebody."

"You never saw anything made? Did you believe"—Nelly laughed merrily—"that puddings and pies grew on trees like fruit?"

"I never thought about it. I really do begin to see that things must be made, else they couldn't be brought up. You see, Nell, I lived for seventeen years in hotels, where certainly no one ever asks how things are made. And then we went into a house of our own, where a house-keeper looks after everything for us. It's a kind of hotel, only that all the rooms are private rooms, and we invite the people to our *table d'hôte* at eight. And then, of course, there is the Magic Knob."

"What is the Magic Knob? I never heard of a Magic Knob."

"It was the present of a Jinn," Francesca explained, gravely. "He gave it to me when I was a baby. He looked, I am told, a very benevolent old Jinn when he called bearing his gift, but I now begin to doubt his kindness, for I think he meant mischief. There are such Jinns, you know. He brought me a Magic Knob for his gift—quite a simple white button of a thing—and laid it in my cradle. 'Place this Knob,' he said, 'on the wall, wherever the child is living. Teach her, whenever she wants anything, to press the Knob, and to ask for it. She may ask for anything—horses, carriages, dinner, amusements, friends, anything. All she has to do is to press the Knob.' Did you ever hear of such a kind old Jinn? It is only for us Orientals, you know, that Jinns do these things. I suspect that it was a Jinn who taught you how to play the banjo so beautifully. The gift is, perhaps, better than my Knob. Well, you may be quite sure that they made haste to teach me the properties of the Magic Knob, and of course I was quick to learn how to use a gift which provided such wonderful things. I have it still, this Magic Knob, but I purposely left it at home. I press it with my thumb, and, ecco! whatever I want comes up the lift."

"I understand," said Nell. "You're so rich you have only to ring the bell. "I like this kind of talk, Francesca. I could never put things in that way. You ought to write a book. A Magic Knob!"

"That is the meaning of my little apologue. Here is no Magic Knob, and my Jinn is no use to me."

"Here," said Nell, "if we want anything we have got to make it for ourselves—just as I am now going to make the pie. And if you can't afford to buy the materials, want's your master, as they say. That's why I haven't got a silk frock. And now, if you like, we'll go down into the kitchen."

She led the way down the narrow stair; Francesca followed, expecting a gloomy vault. She found herself in a small, well-lighted basement room. There were shelves with plates and dishes; bright dish covers hung on the wall; the place was curiously clean and bright.

"This is my kitchen," said Nell. "It's only a little one, but it is clean, at any rate. And now I'm going to get the things ready."

"Strange," said her visitor, "that I have never seen a kitchen before! I suppose big kitchens are like little ones, since the same things come out of them."

There was in the kitchen a girl of fifteen or so, a slip of a girl, who evidently represented the Service. Her name was Alma; she wore a white apron like a nurse, and she had big eyes. She stood staring at the young lady who had never seen a kitchen before. When she fully understood the strangeness of this experience, she began to laugh continuously. This did not interfere with her assistance. She placed on the table a basin with flour, a plate with butter, another plate with a piece of steak upon it; a slab of wood, a rolling-pin, the salt and pepper, and other ingredients. Then Nelly washed her hands, turned up her sleeves, and began, while Francesca looked on.

"Oh!" she cried. "It really is interesting. This is how the pie-crust looks before it is baked; and this is the meat. Nelly, don't you think we shall remember how dreadful it looked before it was baked? Shall we be able to eat any?"

"It doesn't look half so dreadful as the meat that other people eat. This is Kosher—our own meat. You won't find it look dreadful at all when the pie comes up. Now, Alma, the pepper."

"To think," said Francesca, "of one's want of curiosity! I never before in all my life asked myself how things got made. If I wanted pie I pressed the Magic Knob, and pie came up the lift. It makes things so real—so real"—her voice dropped—

"just to feel that things have got to be made by hands. That deceitful Jinn! Everything was part of the machinery. Boots—I suppose they have to be cleaned. And toast has to be baked, and beds have to be made."

"Everything's got to be made," said Nelly, "and by my hands too, unless Alma helps."

"Nell, while I am here, will you let me do whatever you do in the house? May I take my share?"

Nelly burst into loud laughing. "Oh!" she cried, "you know nothing; you think everything comes by wishing or asking, or pressing your Magic Knob. You *couldn't*, Francesca. There's your hands to consider first of all. You've got the loveliest, whitest hands in the world."

"Never mind my hands. Tell me what I can do—what you do."

Nelly sat down, her hands and arms white with flour, for the pie was nearly completed.

"Well, now—let us consider. Alma does the scrubbing. She cleans the windows and the door-steps, and washes the stairs and scrubs the kitchen floor and brooms the passage. Alma takes the water to the rooms. Alma scours pots and pans. Alma cleans the knives and boots. Alma washes the vegetables and peels the potatoes. Alma boils the kettle when there is no fire up-stairs. You've no idea what a lot there is to do, even in a little house like this. Alma's a good little maid," Nelly added, with severity, "though she's got the bad manners to laugh before strangers." Here Alma, who had been giggling before the visitor, was reduced to tears and hanging of head. "I do pretty well all the rest. I make the beds, I dust the parlor. Sometimes I lay the fires; I look after the curtains and things. I make and mend the linen; I buy the dinner and make the puddings; I lay the cloth while Alma brings up the things; I wash up the tea things; and I teach my pupils, and make my dresses. What would you like to do of all this, Francesca? What could you do?"

"I believe, if you teach me, I could make my own bed. Everything that one makes for one's self must feel so very truly real."

"It is real sure enough," said Nelly. "Very well, you shall have your own way. And now the pie may be left to Alma—not too fierce a fire, child—and we'll go up-stairs again. . . . Did you see anything you wanted yesterday?"

"Oh yes. I saw your great-grandfather and his household. And I saw outside all those people."

"If you want to go slumming, you can. But what good can you get by seeing poor miserable people?"

"Supposing one was so hard-hearted as not even to feel any pity for miserable people."

"Why should you pity them? They have brought themselves to it. If they'd work and wouldn't drink they would not be there at all, I suppose."

"But the women, at least," said Madame Elveda's daughter.

"The women are worse than the men. Don't talk to me about the women. They are horrible to look at. And their language is enough to make you sick."

"The children, then?"

"Well—perhaps—I don't say. You may pity the children as much as you please. It would be best to take the children away from their parents as soon as they are born. There! Father says it's with men as with horses—the breed is good or bad. Down there it's bad. Emanuel says it is the Law. Wickedness has got to be punished somehow or other to the third and fourth generation. Down there they're mostly in the second or the third—the worst place, you know. Take the children, then, and try if you can teach them to work. But the ladies who poke about don't mean to take the children or to do anything. They just like dabbling in dirt."

"Don't let us dabble in dirt. Let us see the average life—the common life. It has been outside me all along."

"If I was you I would keep it outside me," Nelly replied, incredulous of the ills attendant upon riches. "Common people, to begin with, must be disagreeable, because they are always wanting things they can't get."

"Well, but, Nelly, you who know the working-girl—you are surrounded by working-girls—you must surely feel pity for her."

"Not a bit," said Nelly, stoutly; "we've all got to work, unless we've got money. Work keeps 'em out of mischief. A pretty time we should have if these girls went trapesing up and down the road all day long with their ulsters and their yellow feathers!"

"Well, but their long hours and their dreadful pay."

"How are you going to prevent long hours and bad pay?

There must be long hours and bad pay unless you fix a price for everything. What you can't help you had better let alone. The best of them will get out of the hole somehow."

"Oh!" Francesca grew feeble. "The women are so oppressed—"

"Women oppressed? Not much. Not if they know it. If you want meekness, go to the men. Look here, Francesca, I've seen your mother's book; Clara lent it to me. I've only read a bit—the bit I know, the bit about these parts."

"Well, it's all true, isn't it?"

"I dare say. But you see, she's made a great mistake."

"What's that?"

"She's only left out the Man. That's all. *Left out the Man!*"

"The book dealt with the condition of woman, not of man at all."

"It's this way. She didn't understand. The women and the men must be taken together, not separate. If the women are badly paid, so are the men. The women get the worst of it because they are women, which is natural. But you must take the man as well. It isn't the condition of poor women, but of poor men and women."

"Yet women work apart from the men."

"Sometimes. But their work is all part of the work that men do as well. You must take trade as it is. There are foremen in this street will tell you that wages have got to go lower and lower still if the work is to be carried on at all. How can you help low wages?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I thought—"

"Your mother doesn't know anything about it, Francesca. Excuse my speaking so. But she doesn't when she talks of the women as if they were separate from the men. As for me, I am ever so much more sorry for the men, because they want so many things that we can do without."

"No," said Francesca, firmly. "Woman is the equal of man."

"Is she?" Nelly laughed derisively. "What would father say if I were to get up and tell him I was his equal? What would that old man of ours say if he were to hear such a thing? What would they say in synagogue if a woman was to get up in the gallery and tell the congregation that a woman is as good as a man? Francesca, you are another Lilith. What? You don't

even know about Lilith? I thought all the world knew that story. It's a children's story with us. Lilith, you see, was the first woman made. She was made before Eve. She was given to Adam for his wife. But when she found that she would have to obey her husband she rebelled. She rebelled against the Law. So she was driven out of Paradise and became an Evil Spirit. Then Eve was created, and she understood that she would have to obey, and did obey—she and all her daughters to the present day. But Lilith hated her, and would have destroyed her if she could. And ever since she has been trying to destroy Eve's children as soon as they are born. We keep her out by a black line of charcoal drawn all round the room. Evil spirits cannot cross the black line. There, Francesca, that's the story of Lilith; and mind you take warning."

CHAPTER XXII

"Fie! Fie! How wayward is this foolish love!"

FRANCESCA finished her letter. It was to Harold. She had promised that the little episode already recorded should make no difference in her letters. But, when she read this letter over before consigning it to its envelope, she perceived that there was a difference. Something had gone out of the letter. Now if you dictate to a short-hand writer you will understand what Francesca felt. Something goes out of a letter when it passes through another hand. Something of yourself goes out of it. The dictated letter is an impersonal thing—a cold thing. She felt that her letter was cold. The soul of it was gone. Why could she no longer write to him in the old familiar way? She perceived the change, and it worried her. Harold would think there was something wrong.

She addressed her letter, however, and put on her hat, proposing to take it to the post. She was so much occupied with her thoughts that she did not become aware, until she reached the last stair, that there was a manly voice—the voice of an angry man—upraised in wrath, and that it was accompanied by crying and sobbing. Both came from the parlor. The man's voice she knew not. But the crying and the sobbing she coupled with the name of Nelly.

She hesitated a moment. Then she threw open the door and looked in. Alas! Nelly was sitting on the sofa, her face in her handkerchief, crying and sobbing in a most lamentable manner. Before her, flourishing his arms, flushed, angry, accusing, stood a young man. Then Francesca remembered. This must be the young man whom Nelly could not marry.

"Oh!" cried the angry young man, his voice trembling with passion. "You've made a fool of me. I've got the lodgings and bought the things, and told the landlady and all the fellows. Everything is ready, and you go and throw me over at the last

moment. What are you made of? What are you made of, I say?"

"Oh, Anthony!" the girl cried. "Oh, Anthony, you are so cruel!"

"You're a flirt; you're a jilt; you're a false, lying, worthless wretch! I ought to be glad to be rid of you. And I am, too—I am. I'll go and throw myself into the river. My last words shall be that you done it—you—it was suicide, on account of a fathful love and a false girl. It will be on the bills. 'Romantic Suicide! A False Mistress! A Constant Lover! Inquest! Verdict!'" His voice rose with gloomy satisfaction as he considered the glory of this end. "All the same, you're a jilt. You lead a chap on and on. You tell him that you love him. You let him put up your name at the Registry; you let him buy the furniture, and then you throw him over at the last moment. Well, I'm going"—but he did not move. "You can tell the fellows to fish me out of the river Lea below the works, where the water's green with chemicals, and it's certain death only to tumble in. I shall be dyed green. You can tell 'em where to look for me. A green body, tell 'em—green." He looked as grim as he could manage. "And you'll remember all your life what a banjo-player you've destroyed. You—with your religion and stuff! If a girl loves a chap, what does she care about her religion, especially when it's a mouldy old synagogue?"

Then he perceived Francesca and stopped short.

"I am very sorry," said Francesca. "I did not know, Nelly dear, you were in trouble."

"Oh, Francesca, I have been foolish! I let him come here, and I was afraid all along that it couldn't be. I ought to have stopped him before. Now I know it can't be. It's too much to ask of any girl. But I encouraged him. What am I to say?"

"Couldn't be!" echoed the young man. "Why couldn't it be, I should like to know?" He caught her roughly by the wrist.

"Let me go!" cried Nelly, springing to her feet. "Francesca, tell him I am not so heartless as he thinks. It was a foolish dream. Tell him that it is impossible. Let me go, Anthony! Tell him he must not come here any more. I can't bear it. Tell him, Francesca."

She tore herself from the young man's grasp and ran out of the room. Had Francesca observed it—she left the door ajar—had

any one outside, say Emanuel, observed, he would have seen her stop outside the door to listen, whether in hope or despair I know not. But she did listen. She was not above listening. And her listening, as you will learn, changed her whole life, and caused things unnumbered. For, as the moralist has often assured an unheeding world, we never know what is going to happen.

Nelly listened; she checked her sobs; she bent forward and then she listened. And this is what she heard, and what went on which she did not see.

Francesca remembered the words of Clara about Nelly's love-affair; impossible love-affair she called it. This, then, was the lover, hearing for the first time that the thing was impossible. She felt pity for the unfortunate young man. He took his disappointment so very bitterly. Unlike some young men, who, when they hear that a thing is impossible, laugh and go off with a smile on their lips, this young man stood trembling with emotion; a tear—only one—ran down his flushed cheek, his lips trembled, his head trembled, his hands trembled, his eyes flamed with anger. She felt more pity for him because in this way of showing his anger he betrayed the weakness of his character. He was a good-looking young man, dressed in last year's Piccadilly fashion, light hair that curled all over his head and features which, had they been stronger, would have made him a handsome man; his figure was slight, but in stature he was sufficient.

"Well," he said, roughly, "what's the good of your interfering? Can't Nelly manage her own affairs? You are one of the precious cousins, I suppose, that she is so anxious not to leave. A lot of good you are to her—you and the rest of you!"

"I am not one of Nelly's cousins, but I am a friend of hers."

"Very well, then. I suppose you think it's a fine thing to draw a man on and then to make a fool of him. Why, all the fellows know about it. A fool of me! That's what she's done. She's been out with me; she's walked with me; she's been to the theatre with me; she been to Chigwell and to the Forest with me; she's taken my presents; she's asked me to tea—here; she's introduced me to her cousin. Oh! and she said she loved me! She said she did. And now she throws me over."

"I think you are very much to be pitied, Mr.— Pray what is your name?"

"My name is Hayling—Anthony Hayling. You must have

heard my name," he added, "in connection with our local Parliament. I speak there. I am acknowledged to be their best speaker."

"I fear you have been treated very badly, Mr. Hayling. But you see that Nelly herself acknowledges this. She says she is very sorry. Can't you understand that she did not quite realize what it meant."

"She knew that I wanted to marry her. What else could it mean?"

"Yes—but she did not understand—well—how much you wanted, and besides, she did not understand what her marriage with you would mean! Can you not make allowance for her now that she does understand?"

"No—I can't. And I won't!"

"Let us sit down and talk the thing over quietly. Take the sofa, Mr. Hayling. Pick up your hat. Now, let us talk reasonably. You know that if Nelly married you she must give up her father, her cousins, her friends, her religion — everything. She must go to you quite alone, without a friend in the world."

"So she says."

"This is a great thing to ask a woman to do for your sake, Mr. Hayling. Do you think — let me ask you seriously — that there is any woman in the world for whom you would do so much? Think, to give up all your friends—everything—for the sake of a woman?"

"Women are different," said the chivalrous lover.

"Well, then, since you must acknowledge that it is a great thing for her to do, what are you going to give her in return?"

"Give her? Don't I tell you that I am going to marry her?"

"That I understand. But again, if you propose to begin by robbing a girl of those things which she can never replace—never, mind—for the early friendships and the ties of blood, if you break them, leave a blank that cannot be filled up, I say then, what are you going to give her in return for this sacrifice?"

"Give her?" he repeated. "I am going to marry her, I say; isn't that enough?"

It was no use. Against this sublime vanity no question or reason or argument could effect anything. "You believe," said Francesca, "that a woman may make any sacrifice—any—and that you more than repay it by condescending to marry her."

"I don't know what you mean by condescending."

"Never mind. After marriage — we will suppose that she thinks the price paid fully compensates—you expect, I suppose, your wife to obey you?"

The young man smiled, superior. "I should like to see the woman," he replied, "who wouldn't obey me."

"Quite so; and just what I expected. The woman is the lower animal, you think."

"I don't know about lower. But of course she's got to do what she's told."

"Yes. And about this bargain. The girl has thrown over everything in order to marry you. In return you give her—Yourself. Have you got anything else to give? Money — prospects—anything? How are you going to live?"

"I've got quite as much to begin with as any other fellow. Thirty shillings is not such a bad screw, and Nelly can make as much herself, and more, at her own work."

"So you expect her to contribute her share towards the housekeeping?"

"Of course I do."

"Her bargain, therefore, is this: She gives up everything—friends and religion and all — in order to marry you; she continues her own work; in addition she obeys a new master; she takes care of your household and your clothes and things in addition to her own; and she has to consider the possibility of children. What do you give her in return? Yourself. Mr. Hayling, I think you value yourself at a very high figure."

Mr. Hayling laughed. "Girls are all the same," he said. "What's the good of talking about bargains? What do girls think about bargains and exchange and all that rot? They want their fancy; they want no other girl to get him. Nell would have ME. That's all she wants to make her happy. If you knew ME, miss," he added, modestly, "I think you'd say that was enough for any girl. Suppose, now, just for argument, that you were in love with me."

Francesca pushed her chair back "We will suppose no such nonsense, Mr. Hayling."

"Oh, it's just as you like! All I meant was this: What's the good of asking about the bargain? When a girl's in love, I say, she doesn't stop to consider the bargain. She wants the man

all for herself, and not for any other girl to get him. That's what she wants. And what I say is that Nelly was in love with me, and I believe she is still, only she's frightened by you, or somebody like you, about giving up this and that. Let her come to me, that's all. I'll be religion and father and mother and sister and brother and cousins and all. I told her cousin Clara so, three weeks ago. Only let her come to me. Work for me? Of course she will. And joyful to do it. If she wouldn't, another girl would. Obey me? Of course she will, and joyful too. If she wouldn't another girl would. You're a girl yourself, and you can't pretend that it isn't true. Have you ever been in love? You are turning red. Then you have. And you know."

This speech certainly put the case with elementary simplicity. Where was equality? Where the equal rights? Every kind of sacrifice expected of the girl; of the man, nothing. And to give up everything for the sake of this insignificant little clerk! In her innocence, Francesca had thought that girls should be wooed and won. But that girls should be willing to do everything and give up everything in eagerness to be married, in order to prevent other girls from getting "the man of their fancy"—oh! "Of their fancy!"—this was new to her. She also thought that if a man should win a girl, there should be gifts, great gifts, all that a man has to give—that is, not only money for the house, but the distinction of intellect and ability and station. But here was a man who could bring his wife nothing—nothing at all—except himself.

She repeated this last remark aloud.

"And quite enough, too," said the young man. "What more could a girl expect?"

If this was all, where, again, was the equality of woman? Who can do battle for such women as these?—if they do not desire even the assertion of their own equality?

"You think, Mr. Hayling, that any girl would be honored by your attentions?"

"Come to that," he replied, "though you sneer over it, I think she would. See here, Miss— I don't know your name. Nelly hasn't told you much, I see; she hasn't told you that I am not only a clerk in the works. I've three strings to my bow, and all of them good strings, strong strings. I'm Parliamentary—I speak in our Parliament. I can get into the House if I like. After that

you'll see how I'll run up the ladder. Then, I can sing and play the banjo. If I should go on the boards there's a fortune. And I'm scientific; in a chemical works I know how things are made. You shall see, if you like, what I can give any girl who marries me."

"I am afraid, Mr. Hayling, you underestimate the difficulty of rising in the world."

"You don't believe me? Well, I can't make you believe me, but if you'll come some evening to our Ladies' Gallery, or if you'll hear me play and sing. I can't show you here, because I've done with this house and everybody in it."

"You are very kind, Mr. Hayling. I only wanted to make you understand that you must not be so selfish as to expect such a sacrifice from Nell. As I seem to have failed in making you understand anything of the kind, I think you had better go."

She pushed back her chair and rose. He, too, rose and stood before her, and in his face there was gathering an expression which disquieted the girl—no girl can fail to perceive the meaning of a certain look in a man's eye. To be sure, there is a vast gulf between such a one as Harold Alleyne and such a one as Anthony Hayling, yet the expression of the eyes was the same with both.

"Enough said, Mr. Hayling. You had better go."

"Wait a bit. We're off with the old love, ain't we? That's done with. Nelly may go and be hanged, for all I care. There's as good girls in the sea as ever came out of it. She's done with. I don't care. I've seen a girl I like better, and that's you, Miss—What's your name? Something pretty, I swear. Come, now. You can't hurt Nell, because she's given me up of her own accord. I have told you who I am, and what I mean to do. I don't care twopence about her any longer. She's made a fool of me. If you'll take her place, you can."

Francesca placed the chair between and laughed. She was not even angry; she laughed. Take the place of Nell beside the little clerk!—she laughed aloud.

"I thought you'd catch on," said this young man, desirable. "They always begin by laughing. Come, now; shall we say next Sunday? Nelly? Why, she isn't fit to hold a candle to you! I never saw much in her at any time, only she was so fondling, you know; she made me take pity, and—"

Here the door burst open violently and Nelly herself rushed in.

She was the jealous woman. She interposed, like a goddess out of a machine, to stop the triumph of the other girl. Flames visibly darted from her eyes; her cheek had a red blot on either side as big as half a crown; she gasped, she panted; she caught her heart with her hand. She was that creature so seldom seen in more cultivated regions—the woman ungoverned and ungovernable, wounded in her affections and in her self-respect.

"Oh!" she cried. "Before my very eyes! In my own house! No—I won't have it, I won't endure it! Go!" She turned to Anthony. "Let me never see your hateful face again! Oh! You would drown yourself for a girl one minute, and the next—oh! And you—" She turned fiercely upon Francesca. "You! —oh! You would take my lover from me!"

Although she had ordered Anthony out of the house, she did not, apparently, expect him to obey; for she threw herself between him and Francesca, and now turned upon the latter, her hands clinched, panting, raging, maddened. Fortunately, Francesca had the protection of the chair which had first served her against the fickle youth.

"He isn't worth it, Nelly," said Francesca. "After this you ought to send him away and despise him."

Nelly wrung her hands. She could not be jealous of this calm, cold girl, who looked down upon the faithless lover with such a scorn. She burst into crying and wailing. "Oh!" she moaned. "I wish I was dead! I am so miserable! Oh, what shall I do?—what shall I do?"

"Come away with me, Nelly dear, and forget that such a man exists. He will find another girl in an hour or two, I dare say."

"Oh! no—no—no—I cannot!"

Anthony Hayling turned airily to his old sweetheart, laughing. "Suppose I knew you were behind the door all the time, Nell—eh? Suppose I knew I should fetch you with pretending? Why, do you think I'd make real love to a stand-off, stuck-up girl like this girl here? You ought to know me better, Nelly. There's no nonsense about me. It's an arm round your neck;" he suited the action to the word, and drew the girl gently, and— Francesca looked to see her tear herself away. But no, pride and love cannot dwell together; that is an old, old saying. Instead of indignantly tearing herself away, Nelly sank on her knees—actually on her knees—before this shallow, hare-brained pretender, who,

one minute before, had been ready to take on another girl, and had actually seriously proposed to begin a new courtship with the other girl, and in her hearing, too. She sank upon her knees, and she caught his hand and kissed it. "Oh, Anthony!" she murmured, "Anthony! I cannot live without you. I will give up everything—friends and home and religion and all—and I will go with you. Oh, Anthony, only forgive me—forgive me!"

He raised her. He placed her weeping on the sofa. Then he folded his arms, and, looking up at the corner of the ceiling, as they do at the Pavilion Theatre, he said, grandly, "Nelly, thou art forgiven!"

CHAPTER XXIII

By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place.—*Browning.*

It was morning—the morning after the storm. Calm—a sweet and holy calm—followed the storm. The only signs of the recent tempest were shown in the downcast eyes and shamefaced cheek with which Nelly busied herself among the cups. Emanuel sat silent, full of thought—who would tell him of such a trifle as a woman's jealous fury and a woman's love? Francesca in her morning greeting tried to throw forgetfulness over the last night's scene, but she succeeded imperfectly.

The silent breakfast was finished. Emanuel rose as if to leave the girls, but changed his mind, and, turning to Francesca, began to talk. And the talk became a discourse, and the discourse became a sermon, and the sermon ended with a discovery and a gift—the reverse of an offertory. Why should not the preacher, if he chooses, preach among the teacups?

He plunged at once into the subject.

"You saw," he said, "on Saturday at Synagogue and Sunday in that street, perhaps for the first time in your life—perhaps you understood what you saw, but I think not—the faces of a fallen people. Nothing fills me with so much sadness as to walk and talk among these unfortunate exiles of Poland and Russia, and to mark the degradation of the type."

"They looked very miserable," said Francesca.

"Their degradation is stamped upon their faces, on their figures, on their bearing, in the very tones of their voices. Take the face—the mean, insignificant face—mark the low cunning in their eyes; you cannot choose but to despise the face. But find some pity for him who owns it. Try if you can to restore that face to its original type."

"What is that type? I cannot restore it unless I know it."

"Every face, however distorted, may be made to show the

original mould from which it has been disfigured. The mould of these poor little Polish Jewish faces is not unlike your own."

"Oh, but I am not a Jewess!"

"We will speak of that presently."

Emanuel left the table and began to pace the room, as if motion helped him to put his thought into speech, stopping from time to time to deliver his message. Nelly bent over her cups and saucers, and made no sign of attending at all. Francesca sat with folded hands, answering only when the speaker seemed to expect some word of reply.

"The original mould of the face," he went on, "was the same as your own. What that mould actually was when it left the Creator's hand—how perfect, how beautiful it was—no man can comprehend. We are commanded not to make any graven image, or to worship any graven image. Why? Because so wonderful is the power of the human face and the human form, even imperfect and degraded, so marvellously do they set forth and proclaim the spirit that lies beneath, that long ago, were it not for this law, we should have stayed the growth of the soul by an imperfect comprehension of the body. We cannot understand, we cannot realize, the first and perfect face of Man. This the Rabbis, in their wisdom, signified when they feigned fables about Adam's colossal stature. Think of it, Francesca. According to our belief, the first man was made after the image of the Creator. He therefore who can understand the face and form of the first man, is as near unto the Creator as Adam himself. His face was changed by the Fall. But something of the Majesty Divine was left upon it, to reappear in the faces of the Prophets. Between the face of Adam and the face of the little starving Polish Jew, how great a gulf! Perhaps," he added, critically, "the nearest approach to that type remains, as I have said before, in such a face as yours, Francesca."

"Oh, but this is too great a thing to say!" Francesca blushed, though it was not an idle compliment. "Why in my face more than in yours, Emanuel?"

"Because you are a woman and a maiden pure and holy. But never mind yourself; think only of that type—the true face that belongs to the Chosen People. Draw up in array before you all the types in the world, the English, the French—but there is no French type—the Spanish, the Italian, the Russian, the Red Ind-

ian—everybody. Take the noblest form of each and compare it with the noblest form of our face. Refine and raise that face. Make it fit for the highest spiritual level which you are capable of understanding, and you will begin to approach to the original type from which this poor Polish face has fallen. There are two theories: one of man fallen to rise again after many struggles; the other of man advancing—whither? Both end in the same: the Achievement, or the Recovery of the man made after the image of God. The story of Adam may be an allegory or it may be exact history. In either case the lesson is the same. In one theory man's face, like his spiritual nature, has changed so as to be hardly recognized; in the other, it is slowly changing from the lower to the higher types. I prefer the theory of the fallen Man. I look to see his face become again, more and more, however slowly, the face of Man before he fell."

"And you mean that all these poor creatures whom I saw on Sunday ought to bear that face? They are far enough from it now."

"They are, indeed. But take the face of one." He took out a pocket-book and rapidly sketched a face. By the dexterous placing of a line here and a curve there he produced a face which for meanness, servility, and abject degradation was fearful and wonderful to contemplate. It seemed the lowest depth possible. "No," said the artist, "there are lower depths still. See now." What was it—a touch to the lips, a curved line—which gave that face the seal of the People? "We are not so low down as this yet. Some of us have been sinking into this hell, but I think we shall sink no lower. Nay, we are rising out of it. The face is beginning to go back again with the new freedom of the race. Francesca, for more than a thousand years this race has been cowering within the city walls. Only within the walls of the city has there been any safety for them. They were forbidden to hold land, to study, to practise any profession, to join other men in any pursuit; the most ignoble trades were assigned to them; abject humility was exacted of them; they were made to live in a separate quarter; on the slightest pretext they were robbed, tortured, and murdered. For more than a thousand years, I say, ever since they began to live in French and German towns, they were so treated. They were always poor, abject, despised, the victims of countless insults. When you see again such faces as

you saw on Sunday, Francesca, remember that they are produced by thirty generations of persecution—relentless, persistent—such as the history of the world cannot parallel. No pen has ever adequately treated the sufferings of our People; no race has ever endured so much and survived so much. 'How long, O Lord?' Hear the cry of thirty generations!—'How long, O Lord, how long?'

"Look at this face," he resumed, after a pause. "You see what it is, and how it has become what it is. Suppose the long line of generations began with the noblest face that ever graced the earth, what would it become after these thousand years of such debasement? What would it become, I ask you? Nay, that you have seen — let us ask, rather, what it may become. See!"

Then with a few touches of his pencil he began, little by little, to restore that fallen and degraded face. "See, Francesca. Here is this man's great-grandfather. He is a poor creature, is he not? You saw the like of this man on Sunday morning keeping a stall for the sale of shirts at a shilling apiece. A poor creature, yet better than his grandson has become under similar conditions. Here is his great-grandfather—we have gone back five hundred years. His head is larger, his look more noble, but full of sadness. Here is one of the same stock; he was murdered by the first Crusaders on their march across Germany. The time is almost the beginning of the Ghetto and the slavery. He holds his head erect; he has not yet lost his dignity; you would think him some stout burgomaster. The face has regained a something—has it not?—of the finer mould. Here, again, you have the ancestor of your poor little decayed Jew in the time of the Romans; he is a learned Rabbi, one who fiercely divides the Law. Perhaps his name is the Rabbi Akiba, whose living body will presently be torn to pieces by iron hooks."

"It is a noble face," said Francesca. "But, Emanuel, it is your own."

That was so. In tracing back the debased features to their original type, Emanuel unconsciously produced a rough portrait of himself.

"Is it mine?" he asked, smiling. "Then it is yours, too. See! here is the feminine form of this type."

It was, and Francesca saw her own face beside Emanuel's. "It

is strange," she said. "But the Moors are Arabs—Western Arabs—and the Arabs are the children of Ishmael."

"The type is that of the warrior—the commander—the conqueror. Remember, child, that the Israelite was a warrior. He fought, he conquered, he settled down—the conqueror among the conquered, who tilled the fields for him. The Israelite in all ages has loved power above all things; his greatest punishment, therefore, has been his state of poverty and weakness. He who above all things longs for power, who would be lord and king, has been reduced to the level of the lowest slave. Hence those faces that you saw. Now they will recover their ancient form. Everywhere, except in Russia, the world is open to our People: we are free to develop as we choose. The reproach that we live for money-getting will gradually cease. Our better spirits everywhere strive for better things. Not in a day, or a year, or a century, will the character of a people be changed, for to destroy the walls of the Ghetto is not to transform the residents. But how many of us already have stepped into the free air outside, and know a larger life! Already, I think, the faces show signs of a return. Child"—his voice sank—"I tell you a new thing. When we speak of our ancestors we speak of ourselves; when we speak of our descendants we speak of ourselves. I will show this to you at another time—the life that your father and your grandfather lived is stamped upon your face; you will transmit to your children your own history—the history of your deeds and your thoughts. Watch the crowds that pass along the street; consider the dull and heavy faces of most even of the young men—they show the dull and sensual lives of the father and the grandfather. One or two more such lives and they sink to a lower stage; they plunge into the depths where they lie in the hell like sheep, for the third and fourth generation. As is the face, so has been the life. As is the father's life, so is the son's face. It is a careless world, child; the living think not of the dead; nor do they praise the memory of those who saved them from those lower depths. Look at me, child—face to face—full face— So— Yes, your father was a man of thought and study—perhaps your grandfather as well."

"My father was a man of science. His father and his grandfather—all the race—were scholars and men of science."

"So I could read in your face, Francesca. Well, consider the

People a little more. On Saturday last you saw the most ancient worship now existing in the world. Without that worship the People would long ago have been dissolved and mixed with the nations around them, as the Franks were dissolved and mixed with the Gauls, and the Romans with the tribes around them. That worship keeps us together. It has been hedged around and protected by the greatest jealousy; the most minute rules have been framed for its preservation; it is our bond of union. All over the world on the Sabbath the same prayers are chanted, the same Law is read. In some little humble synagogue of an Abyssinian village the poor Jews—the Falashes—gather for this same service as their brothers in a stately Temple here or in Paris. It is the ritual of our religion that keeps us together. The Christians, too, have their religion; has it availed to keep them together? The Moslem has his religion; does it bind together in bond of brotherhood the Sunnite and the Shiite?"

"I heard your service for the first time on Saturday last."

"Our service, as perhaps you understood, is a Celebration and a Rejoicing. It celebrates the grand Triumphal March of Man under the guidance of the Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night. There is nowhere else—in no other Religion—to be found a service fuller of rejoicing and of Faith. The Christian's is a service of abasement. Every act of worship with him belongs to the Day of Atonement. He trembles before the Judge. The Jew feels no such terror. To the Day of Atonement belongs the humiliation of the sinner; to the Sabbath belong the singing and rejoicing of the children in the presence of the Father. You could not fail to recognize that rejoicing in the service, though you knew not the words."

"Yes, it was full of joy."

"It is this service which binds us together. As for our religion, it rules every action of our daily lives; it gives us a common ritual for every day. We are never left without the Law; it is with us from the moment that we rise to the moment that we fall asleep; none of us can live without the Law. It is objected that the Jew is bound by useless and trifling rules; so many prayers to be said on such and such an occasion, so many benedictions every day to be pronounced, so many laws to obey. Very well. Why all these details? When the Law was given it was to a rude and ignorant people; they had to be separated from all other nations

and kept separate. The only way to effect this was by a code of laws which should make them feel every day and every moment that they were so separated. They must be bound so tightly that there should be no escape. Some of the rules are trifling, yet it is by trifles that habits are formed. There are six hundred laws which the Jewish boy must learn; it seems a needless multiplication of laws, but every law is another rope that binds the People together, and by daily practice these laws become a part of the boy's nature; he obeys until he cannot choose but obey. By the daily Law, by the weekly services, as well as by the persecution of his People, the Jew has remained a Jew. Heap miseries upon him; pour contempt over him; cover him with shame; he remains a Jew, obedient to the Law all the week, and triumphant, always triumphant, on the Sabbath."

Francesca inclined her head—without speaking.

"These miseries—this contempt—have been heaped upon the heads of a People to whom the world owes everything that has lifted it out of the mire. Think what the Christians are now, and what they have done compared with the followers of Buddha, Mohammed, or Confucius. Yet they owe everything—what they are and what they have done—to the nation they persecute. Try to imagine what would the world be were the Hebrew books destroyed and forgotten and all their influence expunged from the civilization and thought of the world? Imagine, if you can, the English-speakng race, the most religious in the world except ourselves—because they have assimilated our Books—without the Psalms of David, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the imagery, the poetry, reached by no other poetry in the world, of our Prophets. Our commandments give the Christians a rule of conduct; our Law gives him a day of rest—that priceless gift—all the virtues of the Puritan, his courage, his obstinacy, his morality, came straight from us. What would the English Milton be without our literature? What the English Shakespeare? More—much more—the world may still receive from our Law if it will. There are a hundred things in our Law which the world would do well to adopt and to obey. You do not even know your own law. Take the Year of Release. Have you ever heard of it? Do you know what it means, the Year of Release? On that year all debts were to be cancelled. He who had pledged his lands received them back; the slave was set free, the debtor was

discharged. This was our Law. Devise, if you can, any better means of repressing the greed of riches and preventing oppression than the Year of Release. Again, the world will some day receive our Law concerning food fit for man. We obey that Law. As a consequence we live longer, and are more free from disease than any other race. I have heard of the Patriarch whom you visited yesterday. He is a Jew; he is a hundred and three years of age. It is not wonderful to me that he has lived so long, because he is a Jew. The Christian dies at seventy; the Jew lives to a hundred years."

Again he paused. Francesca made no interruption. He walked about the room for a minute or two, thinking. Then he began again upon a different branch of this great subject.

"We have been a great people in the past. We shall become a greater people in the future. I have spoken only of the Hebrew Scriptures which rule the Western world. All that the Christians know of the Jews is what they read of them in our sacred books which they call their own. But there is another part of the Jewish history of which the world knows nothing. We were dispersed, but we were not everywhere persecuted and humbled. We found homes around the Mediterranean, beyond the limits of the Roman Empire, in India, even in China. All the learning of the Babylonian schools belonged to us. The civilization of the Persians was ours. For a thousand years we had our king in Babylonia, the Prince of the Captivity; for six hundred years there was a great Jewish kingdom in South Arabia; our scholars, none others, kept alight the lamp of learning. But for us even the literature of Greece and Rome would have perished. Our People—my ancestors and yours—were statesmen, physicians, astronomers, scholars to the Moorish kings of Spain; even at Oxford there were Halls—Moses Hall, Lombard Hall, Jacob Hall—where our Rabbis taught Hebrew to Christian scholars." Now, as he spoke, his eyes lit up, his cheek glowed; he was carried out of himself, and he carried with him the soul of the girl who listened, with glowing cheek and parted lips and eyes filled with a new and strange light. For this man held her with the triple spell of voice and eyes and intensity of earnestness. Never before had she encountered a man of earnestness so deep, and faith so profound. Faith? This child of no religion had never before met with any faith at all. "Think," he went on,

"of the great men of modern times; what nation in the world can boast a greater string of names than ours? Think of Maimonides, Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Heine, Philipsohn, Oppert, Jessel, Meyerbeer, Moscheles, Rachel, Grisi, Bernhardt, Sylvester, Disraeli —why, with what a leap and a bound do they step to the front when the wall of the Ghetto is thrown down! Poet, lawyer, painter, actor, statesman, physician, musician — there is not a branch of learning, art, or science in which the Jew is not in the front rank. The thousand years of oppression have left no mark upon his mighty spirit. He steps from the lowest depths, where all the world flings mud upon him, straight to the front, and he stands there. 'Behold!' he says. 'Thus and thus have I done. Give me, too—ME—a place among the immortals! Other races have been persecuted and despised. What have they done? Nothing. Parsee, Czech, Basque, Wend, Celt, Cagot—what have they done? Nothing—Nothing. It is not for nothing alone in our degradation that we were the Chosen People. Wait—this is but a beginning — wait some fifty years. Then the reign of the Jew will begin. First in Western Europe; then in America. He will control the finance of the world, and he will lead in literature and all the Arts. For as we have been brought so low in the day of humiliation we shall be exalted so high in the hour of triumph.'"

He paused. He had been speaking, without apparent excitement, in a low voice. But his eyes were flashing when he stopped.

Francesca bowed her head. She could not tell him how much his words had moved her.

He sat down beside the table. He leaned his head upon his hand, and he spoke in an altered voice. "To me also," he said, "it has been given that I should do a great thing. Yes — to me. It is so great a thing that I am oppressed with it. I brought it here—to London. I would give it, I thought, to my friend, Harold. To the young man who loves you. It shall be his—the glory of it and the fame of it if he chooses. To me it is enough to know that this great thing — the great thing — this most wonderful thing—should have been discovered by one of the race of Spinoza and Maimonides. I will tell you, Francesca, when I tell Harold—because he loves you.

He was silent awhile. Then he rose and stood over her, and

said, quietly: "Why is my daughter ashamed of her own People?"

"But I am not one of the People, Emanuel. You are all determined to turn me into a Jewess. I suppose I have something of the Jewish look. I have heard men in Paris say as I pass, 'Elle est Juive.' It is the Oriental look. I have told you already, Emanuel, I am a Spanish Moor."

"Who taught you that story?"

"My mother. My father, who is dead, was a Moor by descent. The family rose to great things in Spain; they held offices of State; they were rich; they were ennobled. It is said, but I know not how far this is true, that, though they openly conformed to the Catholic Faith, they remained secretly Mohammedans."

"Why," said Emanuel, "all this proves what I say. There were never any secret Mohammedans, but there were Jews in secret, families which for generations secretly practised the rites of their old religion, obeyed the six hundred rules, read the Book of the Law once every week, and held the Feasts and the Fasts. And they were never discovered; or, as some say, they were so highly placed that none dared to discover them. One such family was my own. Another, I believe, was yours. Tell me—your mother taught you to call yourself a Spanish Moor. Is she, then, a devout Catholic?"

"No. She belongs to no religion, and goes to no place of worship at all."

"Then you have no brother or sister. What do your cousins say?"

"I have no cousins at all. I am alone in the world, except for my mother."

"No cousins at all? Had your father no cousins? Had your mother no cousins? Were both of them actually the last of their race? This would be most wonderful that a man the last of his race, with no kin at all, should marry a woman the last of her race with no kin at all."

"I do not understand what you mean, Emanuel," she replied, changing color.

"You have no cousins. It is all quite plain. Either your father or your grandfather, for some reasons of his own—let us not inquire—left his People. When he left them he left his re-

ligion, his friends and his brothers, sisters, cousins, and all. What does it mean that you have no cousins? That your father left his People, that you have been taught to call yourself a Spaniard —which is true—without doubt—and a Spanish Moor, which is, perhaps, true in so far as your People, like my own, may have been in the Peninsula ever since the occupation of the Moors. But, Francesca, you are a Jewess. My child, you are a Jewess—a Jewess!"

"No; it is impossible. Why should my own mother deceive me?"

"Because, doubtless she was herself deceived. Moor or Spaniard matters nothing. The intention was that the separation should be complete. You were never to know even that your descent was from this People, so illustrious and so persecuted."

"No; it is impossible," Francesca repeated. But her face turned pale, and her eyes spoke of doubt.

"You were born, like the rest of the world, into a whole family of cousins, with common kith and kin and a common history. You have not been allowed to know of their existence. You were placed in the world quite alone, because even a mother cannot supply the companions of your own age and your own kith. What has been the result, the effect of this isolation upon you? Why are you here, sitting with us? The world has become to you like some unreal show, a mummery, a mask enacted for you to look down upon from your hotel windows. You have told me this. Nothing was real to you because you were separated from the world. Thus are the laws of Nature vindicated. Thus was a noble woman in danger of being ruined. Spanish Moor? Oh! Vain delusion! There are no Spanish Moors; Spanish Jews there are in plenty; the Sephardim are a multitude. I am one, Nelly, this child, who is by real name Preciada, is one; Clara, her cousin, is one; and their ancient great-grandfather is one; and, Francesca, you are one. Nay," for Francesca shuddered and shrank back with pale cheeks, "do not be ashamed, child. I have shown you that we are a People—a great People—with a glorious past and a glorious future. I have shown you what we have done for the world, and I have shown you what was once, and will be again, the type of the Chosen People. You are still ashamed?"

"I think of that poor degraded face, Emanuel. I am ashamed

to be ashamed. But yet—oh, it is impossible! Why should I be deceived?"

"There is one thing more. I do not know whether it will move you, yet the love of ancient descent is an instinct with us. Remember that there is no nation in the world which can show genealogies so long. The Bourbons and the Hapsburgs are but as mushrooms compared with us. It is fifteen hundred years since my forefathers, who had wandered all the way from Babylon, set foot on the shores of Spain; we have our genealogy preserved through all those years. There is no Royal House in Western Europe that can go back in line unbroken for so long. It is a line of scholars and men of science. My House—perhaps yours as well—is more ancient than any of Christian Europe. Yet even at the time when that ancestor arrived in Spain his House was ancient and even royal; for he was a son, or grandson, of the Resh Gelutha himself—the Prince of the Captivity—the King of the Babylonian Jews. Nay, he was also a descendant of King David himself. When your grandfather, or your father, left his People, he left his brother and his cousins; he abandoned pride of birth and pride of race; he gave up the old histories and the old associations. To an apostate Jew what would it help even to belong to the line of the House of David?"

"Emanuel," Francesca pleaded, "how can I believe what you say? I have always, since my birth, believed that I was a Moor."

"For some reason, which I know not, you have been deceived. My child, I will prove to you that you are one of Us. The proof is on your forehead. The Lord, when He chose this People, set upon their face a seal which can never, by any art or invention or artifice, be disguised or concealed. I have known all the various races of Jews in the world: the black Jews of India; the Falashas of Abyssinia, who followed Menelek, the son of Solomon; the Jews of Morocco, descendants of those who were expelled from Spain; the Jews of Germany, Russia, and Turkey; the Jews with fair hair and blue eyes—you yourself have brown hair and blue eyes, as I had when I was young—the strong and handsome Spanish Jew; the stunted Polish Jew. Nowhere yet have I seen, nowhere can be seen, any Jew without that stamp upon his face."

"Yet I was always taught"—Francesca objected again, but feebly.

"Yes, yes; I have answered that, and now I will show you the

seal. With your own eyes you shall see how plainly it is set upon your forehead so that all the world can read. It is a sign of pride and exultation if you choose to make it so. It is a sign of shame if you choose to make it so. Now get up." Francesca obeyed. "Stand before that looking-glass"—there was one over the mantel-shelf. He looked at the girl whom both had forgotten. She was still bending over the teacups, idly playing with a spoon, her thoughts far away from the discourse, like the thoughts of a boy in church. "Nelly, child, you have not been listening. Your mind is with your heart. But my talk was for Francesca. Stand up, my dear, and place yourself with Francesca before the glass. So; now look, Francesca."

"Why," cried Nelly, obeying. "It's wonderful! Oh, she's just like you, Emanuel! Push your hair back a little. It's wonderful! She is as like you as two pins! I never saw such a likeness. She might be your daughter."

"And she might be your sister, Nelly, from her likeness to you. What do you see, Francesca?"

"I see an Oriental look common to all three faces. I have seen such a look in the faces of Arabs at Damascus and at Cairo. We are all Orientals. I have seen it in the Moors of Tangiers. Yet you do not count the Moors as your People."

"As for me, I see the Seal of the Chosen People. If the word Jewess was written on your forehead in plain character, it could not be more distinct."

"What is it like, your Seal?"

"On the common face it is a common sign. It is stamped on lips, on nose, or on eyes. On such a face as yours, Francesca, it is neither on your lips nor in your eyes. I cannot say what it is or where it is. But on your face, as on mine, the Lord has set His mark."

"Of course everybody can see it," said Nelly; "we have all known it from the very first."

Then suddenly—Lo!—a miracle!

For at that moment Francesca saw, with her own eyes, what she had never seen before, plainly set upon her own face, the Seal of her own People! Was this man a magician who could not only read her mind and fill her with new thoughts, but could also reveal to her the thing that had been hidden from her birth? Nay, it became revealed to her as a Seal of Glory. For the

simulacrum of her face in the glass changed, it seemed lit up with a new brightness; a new joy danced in her eyes; a new dignity sat upon her forehead; a new smile lay upon her lips; a new and softer glow lay upon her cheek.

"Oh!" she cried, catching Emanuel by the hand. "What have you done? what have you said? Oh, I see it—I see it! Oh, why have I never seen it before? Emanuel, it brightens my face—it lifts my heart! Emanuel, what have you done?"

"I have shown you that you are a daughter of the People who have been led at their darkest always by the Pillar of Fire. Something of that Divine light lingers as it falls upon some of our faces. It lies on yours, child; you are glorified by its presence. Francesca, are you still ashamed?"

"No—no—no!" she replied, the tears gathering in her eyes. "I shall never be ashamed again. Oh, my heart is full! What shall I say to my mother? Oh, what have you done for me, Emanuel? what have you done for me?"

"I have given you back to your own People," he repeated. "Henceforth you shall be no more alone. I do not expect, child, that you will return to the Synagogue which you have never known. You will marry a Christian." Francesca shook her head. "Yes, it is your fate. You will marry Harold. But you must remember always that you are one of Us; you must never be ashamed of us; you must think the best of us; when you next go among the poor degenerate children of Persecution, you must think of the race to which they belong and the type from which they are descended. Daughter"—he held out both his hands, and his eyes filled and his sight was dim—"come back—come back to your own People. You will not return to the Ancient Faith, but you must learn to love the Ancient Race, even in its poorest and meanest children."

She took his hands. "Yes," she said, "I will learn to respect the People. Why is the world so full of contempt for Us—for Us?" she repeated. "We are a great People. The world owes everything to Us—to Us! Why has it come to despise Us—Us? Emanuel, I will learn to love my own People. I must think about it all. It is too much to learn all in a moment—all in one morning. But oh! I have seen the Seal, and the Splendor and the Glory of the Seal."

Emanuel laid his hand upon her head, as if with a benediction.

Then he went out of the room softly, shutting the door after him.

Francesca sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands, her heart beating, her face aglow, filled with new thoughts and new interests.

Nelly began to make up for lost time by washing up the breakfast things vigorously. She said nothing to Francesca until her task was finished.

"Come," she said; "you must not sit there all the morning, Francesca. Why, he's only told you what we knew all along. Clara knew it; I knew it; father knew it."

"But I did not know it, Nelly." Francesca rose with a tearful smile. "And perhaps I am, after all, the chief person to be considered."

"Oh, of course. And now, Francesca—oh! I've been burning to speak. I thought he would never go. I *must* tell you. Francesca, I've made up my mind. I can't live without my boy. I have forgiven him—it is all settled. Oh, Francesca"—for her face was coldly preoccupied—"you don't care a bit. I did think, after last night, you would have cared. Oh! you'd rather go on listening to his sermon."

"No, no, Nelly." Francesca returned to the parlor and the breakfast-tray, and to Nelly's love-story. "Let us talk about it. Only, you see, I was thinking—I was thinking of the Prince of the Captivity and the Royal House of David. I was thinking of the Splendor and the Glory of the Seal. I was looking upward, Nelly, at the Pillar of Fire."

CHAPTER XXIV

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy Wheel"

WHILE Francesca was thus receiving readmission to her own People, her mother at the same moment was experiencing a transformation no less startling. Anybody at any time might have told the girl that she was of Jewish descent; her mother might have confessed the perhaps laudable deception she had practised. This was a thing that might happen at any moment. But such an accident as now happened to this unfortunate lady was very much less likely. Such a thing can only happen in the case of one who has a blind confidence in her own security. "No one can get at my treasure," said Dives, in a former age. "It lies in that wooden chest. Look at the thickness of the sides; look at the solidity; look at the strong clamps of iron that secure it, and the padlocks three which keep it shut." Then came along the crafty robber unexpected, with a little file—nothing but that—and alas! good Dives, where on the morrow was thy treasure? The modern Dives says, in these days, "My fortune is quite safe because it is all invested in shares of the Royal Bank of Bangkok." Alas! the Royal Bank of Bangkok explodes. Where, dear Dives, is now thy fortune?

Madame Elveda was about to begin her morning's work. She opened her letters at ten, and at eleven her private secretary—a young lady who understood both short-hand and the type-writer—would arrive to take her part in the correspondence. The letters of the morning lay, as usual, in a pile upon the blotting-pad. Beside them were the proofs of her newest article, written for one of the most "thoughtful" of the *reviews;* it was that very remarkable paper which appeared this very year, in the January Number, on "Some Minor Aspects of the Woman Question." People talked about it for a whole day and a half. They then forgot all about it, and that article is as if it never had been written, which is the way with every magazine article. Madame El-

veda looked over her list of engagements for the day—one at noon, one at half-past twelve, three for luncheon, and a few "well-chosen words" to be said after that banquet, two more in the afternoon. Madame Elveda was not one of those people who can be crushed with the weight of engagements. She loved the swing and bustle of work. The Cause had a thousand and one branches. If engagements can prove anything, it was advancing by leaps and bounds. Every day more women of light and leading were questioning and arguing and coming in. At least so it seemed to the Leader, as it always seems to every one actively engaged in furthering any object. To make a racket is the first thing necessary; to keep it up, the second thing, and the third thing, and everything after. Madame Elveda, by means of her secretaries, her speeches, her articles, and her societies, kept up the racket continuously.

This morning, quite forgetting that pride goes before a fall, the High-priestess of this great Cause lay back in her chair, reflecting upon her own greatness. She, and she alone, had been able to bring together all the various associations. She alone was able to keep the secretaries from flying at each other's throats. Everything promised well. Her own position was assured; she was a power in society—that is, in certain circles of society. Had she put her thoughts into words, she might have said, "I am the leader of the greatest social revolution ever attempted. I shall become in history the woman who lifted her sex to equality absolute with man. Nothing greater has ever been achieved by any woman since the world began. I am the woman who is fated to overthrow the order that has reigned from time immemorial, in which man has been the master. No woman has ever yet risen to such greatness. What is a queen, an empress, a poet, a singer, an actress, a heroine—what is Helen of Troy, what is Cleopatra, what is Joan of Arc, beside such a woman?"

Then, such is the irony of fate, she began to think of the solidity and stability of her position. Her wealth was unbounded; her reputation assured. Her physical and mental health stronger than ever; she was still in the full strength of all her powers; at forty-three one does not even begin to think of decline. Her eyes fell with satisfaction upon the solid furniture of her library; upon her books in solid binding; upon her massive table; upon her massive chairs; upon the thick carpet and the heavy curtains;

even upon her own dress, and her rings, and her chains of gold; and even upon the ponderous clock upon the mantel-shelf, that ticked heavily and solidly; everything together combined to impress upon her not unwilling mind the stability of her position. "O King, live for ever!" cried the courtiers. Looking around him on the solid pillars of his palace—Shushan possessed very solid structures—with the purple hangings, his own rich garments, the golden crown, the golden plates and cups, the solid mass of guards, the King—was it wonderful?—believed that he really was going to live forever.

Every moralist has observed that those (happily) rare moments when the soul is at perfect rest and tranquillity, and perfectly well satisfied with itself, and perfectly assured about its own future, portend impending misfortune. Hasten at such times, my brethren, to avert this disaster. Throw a ring into the sea; give money to street beggars; subscribe to bogus charities; get rid of some of your vaulting vanity, your inordinate self-respect; acknowledge that you are a man, and therefore weak; a mortal, and therefore vulnerable; confess that your reviewer, yesterday a fool and a scoundrel, is to-day a Solomon—a Solomon come to the judgment-seat. So far all are agreed. But there is another observation to be made. In these times of perfect happiness there is always heard in the secret recesses of the brain a voice which whispers truths which one would gladly forget. Thus in this lady's brain a voice whispered low, but clear and distinct, "You are a great Leader of a great Cause. Do not forget that your money was made in bacon and pork and biscuit. Do not forget that you are not, as you pretend to be, a Spanish Moor, but an apostate Jewess — a Jewess — for all the world to see!" And then she heard another voice—it was the voice of her husband, but stern, terrible—and it cried, "The Law of the Lord! The Law of the Lord! They shall be cast down who try to break the Law of the Lord!"

What followed was, no doubt, coincidence.

Among the letters lying before her was a large, official-looking letter, with a French stamp and a post-mark of Paris. She picked it out from the rest and opened it with a paper-knife.

It was headed, "Préfecture de Police. Directeur de la Sûreté Générale." It was in French, as was also the document which it

contained. Rendered into English, the following were the contents of these two appalling letters:

"MADAME,—I have the honor to communicate to you a copy of a letter found on the table of the *nommé* Achille Desjardins, *avoué*, Rue Nouveau de Petits Champs. The writer was found dead in his room, killed by a pistol-shot in the head.

"Receive, Madame, the assurance of my profound consideration, BELLEAU, *Commissaire de Police.*"

Achille Desjardins a suicide! Achille Desjardins dead—killed by a pistol-shot! Why, M. Achille Desjardins was her agent—her man of business. He had been her agent for twenty years. He held all her papers; he collected her *Rentes;* he sent her money as she wanted it; he invested the great sums which every year accumulated over and above her spending powers. This man was dead!

A horrible, cold shiver passed through and through her. She shivered in head and heart and limbs. What could this mean?

It could mean nothing. The man could neither sell anything of hers, nor change any investment of hers, nor do anything at all with her property. Nothing could be done without her signature. And she never disturbed her investments, which were all in solid stock. There was nothing to fear—nothing. But she opened the enclosure with a beating heart and a pallid cheek. And this, also rendered into English, is what the unfortunate Madame Elveda found herself reading. This was the cynical confession of a Man of Pleasure as well as of Affairs:

"MADAME,—It is a duty—a painful duty—that I owe to all my clients, and to you in especial, as by far the most important and the richest, to inform them—and you especially—that the whole of the funds intrusted to my management by them—and by you in especial—have totally vanished." Here Madame Elveda laid down the letter and looked around. The solidity of the furniture—and, above all, the size of the library table—seemed to reassure her, for she smiled incredulously and resumed the letter —"have totally vanished." "Mine," she thought, "could not vanish, because my signature was wanting before anything could be touched"—"have totally vanished—have, in fact, been wholly lost, squandered, and gambled away." "Not mine," she said,

"not mine." "Your very large fortune—quite the largest in France for a lady—has given me a great many years of pleasure and excitement. With forty or fifty million francs one can go on for a long time, even against persistent bad-luck in operations on the Bourse. I may confess, to save further investigation—which would cost a great deal, and would reveal nothing but what any reasonable person would expect—that I was born with princely appetites and tastes, but without the means of gratifying them, until I was so fortunate as to win your confidence. Madame, that confidence has been rewarded by a respect for you only to be measured by my colossal desires. You, and you alone—for my other clients are few and poor—have enabled me to gratify every taste that a man still young could form—

"'L'aurore de la vie
Appartient aux Amours.'

"I have cultivated the Parisian Art of Luxury with the resources of a Nero. It is impossible for me at this moment, which is so near my last, when Arithmetic would be an incongruous intruder, to calculate how many millions have been consecrated to my Pleasures. I can hardly expect that any lady would be able to understand the rapture of such a life as I have been enabled to spend. For my own part, in looking back I tremble to think of the narrow and unsatisfied life I should have led had it not been for the unsuspected possession of your millions." "My millions!" repeated Madame Elveda, with a white face. "Possession of *my* millions!" "And at this, the last moment of my life, I look back with gratitude and satisfaction to the happy and exceptional chance of being able for twenty years to employ your millions to the gratification of my own tastes. How miserable must be the lot of those—there must be thousands of them—who have no such resources, and must needs look on, through the closed windows, at the Banquet of Life! Noble Banquet! Happy Life! For twenty years I have sat, a happy convive, at that feast. I have invited many to sit with me. I have been happy myself, and the cause of happiness in others. At last I rise against my will. I would continue, but I cannot—

"'Mais quand on n'est plus propre à rein,
L'on se retire, et l'on fait bien.
Bon soir, la compagnie.'

"My resources—your millions—have come to an end. I have spent, Madame, all those millions. Nothing remains." Madame Elveda let fall the letter and looked round. The clear, hard outlines of the solid furniture were blurred; the solid books in their golden rows were leaning against each other; the library table bent and groaned as she leaned her arm upon it; it was as if things were melting away. She shuddered; she took up the letter and went on with the reading, while her heart within her fell as cold as stone.

"In addition to the banquet, which occupied my evenings, I enjoyed, by means of your millions, the excitement all day long of speculation on the Bourse. Next to the banquet of feasting, singing, music, and love-making, I have loved gambling and speculating. Here follows the misfortune, the sole misfortune, of my life. Although I have found the greatest pleasure in the game, a persistent ill-luck has followed me throughout. So much has this been the case that five or six years ago I clearly perceived what the end would be unless I abandoned the pursuit. Alas! one can no more give up the Bourse than one can give up the bottle. The confirmed drunkard is no worse than the confirmed speculator, and one is as hopeless as the other. Had it not been for my impossibility of retiring, I should be still sitting at that banquet, a happy and contented guest; nay, I might have continued to sit there all my life, supposing, which was probably intended, your life would be longer than my own. I continued, therefore, to play on the Bourse. A last the game has come to an end. I have sold out all the rest of your stock—it was not much—and that is gone—all is gone. Let me go, too, before I find out the misery of being a pauper, a bankrupt, and a detected criminal.

"'Morbleu! ma pipe s'est éteinte.
Ne pleurez pas,
Ne pleurez pas.'"

"He sold out? How could he sell out?" asked the unfortunate victim.

"One consideration consoles me as a loyal Frenchman. This money of yours, made by your grandfather, the contractor, out of the British in the Peninsular War, by supplying the bacon which enabled those islanders to drive out our countrymen, has now, by my agency, been scattered in fertilizing showers over the whole of

Paris. The gold of the enemy has thus been made useful for the good of my countrymen.

"As for you, dear Madame, I fear that I can offer no consolation likely to be efficacious. You have no money left, unless you have saved something, which is not likely, out of the amounts you have drawn. They were not large amounts, in comparison with the income at your disposal, and I do not think you can have saved anything." Madame Elveda again put down the letter and took her bank-book out of a drawer. She saw that the amount to her credit was between four and five hundred pounds only—so much, then, against destitution—four hundred and thirty-five pounds four shillings and sixpence. She was now trembling and shaking. The air seemed freezing. She could hardly hold the letter; the words ran into each other.

"You were quite safe, you thought, because nothing could be sold without your signature. Quite so. You forgot, however, that a signature may be imitated. Yes, Madame, the Art of Imitation—commonly called Forgery—is a very simple thing, and easily acquired by any clever man who gives his attention to learning it. Your own handwriting is so clear and so full of character that it is most easy to imitate. It is also so distinctive that everybody thinks he can recognize it at a glance. The more distinctive the hand, the more easy it is to forge. This is not generally known. As I have no further use for the fact, I give it to you. It is my bequest to you. The only difficult signatures are in that common weak handwriting which possesses no character of distinction. This discovery is my own. I repeat that I offer it to you as some return for having permitted me the undisturbed enjoyment of your millions. The Art of Imitation—or Forgery—is one of the most useful and most beautiful of all the Arts. It is, perhaps, of all the Fine Arts the finest.

"I do not ask you, Madame, to forgive me. It would be superfluous. First, because even among Christians no one under the rank of Pope of Rome could forgive such an enormous injury as this—and you are not a Christian. Next, because whether you do or not forgive, I shall never know and never care, for a man with his brains blown out is beyond any desire for forgiveness, remorse, regrets, or anything. In the words of Voltaire—

"'Adieu, je vais en ce pays
D'où ne revint point feu mon père.'

"At this last moment, even, I doubt whether I feel any remorse. No; I do not. What are your sufferings at losing your money compared with mine at having to leave that Banquet? They cannot be compared with mine. Alas!—

"'Adieu, panier, les vendanges sont faites.'

Many years ago, when you intrusted the collection of your *Rentes* to a grave young *avoué* of correct *tenue*, you had no idea that he possessed ideas and desires which were capable of swallowing even all your millions. Had you only known! But I grow prolix. There is no more to say—

"'De da tige détachée,
Pauvre feuille desséchée,
Où vas tu?'

"Accept, Madame, the assurance of my most profound consideration. DESJARDINS."

Madame Elveda read this communication three times; and even at the termination of the third time she did not comprehend the whole meaning of the letter. That the whole of her fortune should be gone—lost—stolen, was incredible. As well might the Czar of Russia awake one morning to hear that the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof had between them overrun all his Empire. One who has been always rich cannot realize quickly either that he may become poor, or that he has become poor. The ruined spendthrift does not at first comprehend that he can no longer drink champagne and eat fat venison. Husks and crusts, peasen and beans, oatcake and spring-water, must henceforth be his portion. But he cannot understand this for some time, and he goes on calling for champagne until the waiters find out that he has no more money, and no one will bring him any more. Madame Elveda looked again about her room—her solid room, with its ponderous table, its massive chairs, its heavy book-shelves, its serious rows of books. The room breathed solidity, stability, permanence. Was this room, and all that therein stood, to vanish like a dream? She closed her eyes and thought of the solid house, crying aloud all through from attic to basement, that here, at least, was stability. Fortune might turn her wheel, but this room had no connection with that wheel. Fate

might rain disasters upon other Houses—not on this. What estate so absolutely safe as one whose investments are all in Government Stock, and are never changed? One thing is always forgotten when a House so prides itself on its stability. It is this simple, old-fashioned rule which connects human nature and property. Where riches are piled up, thieves always try to break in and steal. There are many ways. Formerly they got in at the window and lifted the hearth-stone, beneath which lay the treasure. Now they forge names and imitate handwriting.

Madame Elveda turned again to the official document. The writer, the Commissary of Police, told her plainly that the man, Desjardins, her agent and man of business, was dead; he had committed suicide after writing that letter to her. Then what he said must be true. The robber had sealed his confession with his blood. There could be no doubt at all.

Yet something must be done. She might place the business in the hands of a solicitor, with the certainty that no good would result. If all the money was spent, and the forger dead, what was the good of a solicitor? But she must make certain, somehow, that the man's statement was true.

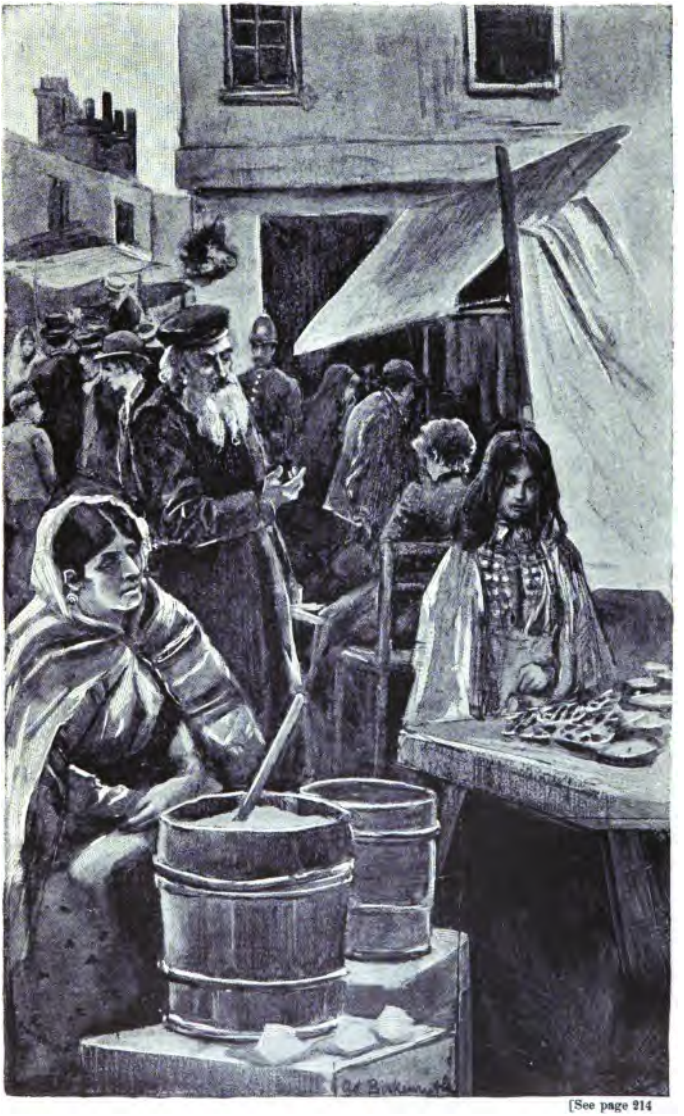
Madame Elveda was a strong woman, and a woman who in every earthly chance or stroke of fate involuntarily and immediately looked forward.

"I must give up this house," she said to herself. "I shall no longer be the Leader, with my great house and my great fortune. I can no longer be Leader. No longer Leader—no longer the Leader. It is all gone, I cannot continue. I may be consulted sometimes, I may be recognized, but I shall be no longer the Leader. What shall I be? Only a poverty-stricken widow; a person who has written a Book, if that means anything. I suppose they will not be able to take from me my Book. A person of no power and no consideration."

That Voice—it was her husband's—began again, "You have always loved Power above all earthly things. Because you tried to trample on the Law, you have been deprived of what you love the most. You must come down; you must follow—you who led."

"They cannot take the Past from me," she murmured, answering the Voice.

"The Past—your Past—it has been the breaking of a summer



[See page 214

SUNDAY MORNING IN MIDDLESEX STREET

ripple on a granite rock; it has been the beating of the waters. You have accomplished nothing."

"The world knows what I have done."

"The world has no memory; the world forgets all except those who are fighting in the arena. You have yet to discover the colossal ingratitude of the world. Why, you will have no money. You have separated from your friends and your People; you have no friends, you have only acquaintances; when you are no longer rich and splendid, but only a shabby passenger on the road, which of your acquaintances will recognize you there?"

Madame Elveda roused herself. This kind of thing was maddening. She got up and rang her bell. She sent for her housekeeper. She said that she had received a letter which might oblige her to break up her establishment and to live abroad for some time; she wanted, therefore, a statement about her liabilities, in order to pay off everything at a moment's notice if necessary. She was pleased to find that practically there were no liabilities.

She dismissed the house-keeper. She then gave orders that no one was to be admitted; that she was not at home. She must at least be alone. Then she set herself resolutely to face the situation. One does this best, whether one writes a poem or calculates how long the money will last, with a sheet of paper and a pen.

"I have the long lease—seventy-five years to run—of this house," she said. "I might let it furnished, or I might sell the furniture and let it unfurnished. The furniture, with all the books and pictures and things, cost a good deal. There is my own jewelry, and there are the few hundreds in the bank. There will remain, at any rate, a pittance—a pittance"—she laughed scornfully. "What can one do with a pittance?"

She was a strong and a masterful woman. For twenty years she had gone her own way in the world, alone and asking for neither help nor advice nor assistance. Yet she would have been alone among women had she not, at that moment, felt that she was friendless. There was but one man of all her friends to whom she could turn at such a moment; whom she could wholly trust as a friend—the man whom she had refused as a son-in-law. And in this disaster he could be of no use to her, of no use at all. Then she remembered the words of her cousin—not the hot-

tempered man who told her to her face that call herself what she might, the boys in the street would shout "Jewess" after her; but the soft-voiced, smooth-spoken man, the man with courteous manner, who most earnestly implored her to look into her affairs, spoke of rumors and reports, and offered, if she wanted advice, to give her such advice as might be in his power. He had also pointed out that in times of trouble the only persons to help, putting aside paid agents, were the members of the family. Could she, after all that had been done, when she had separated herself from her family and from her faith, could she go to this cousin? Not to the other cousin, the man who had insulted her, not to him; but to this courteous man—the man of smooth speech, the man who had accepted the position without a protest. The man, apparently, knew something about her affairs. What did he know? Rumors? Reports? How much did he know? He had come to warn her, and she had neglected the warning. He must know something. Perhaps out of all this amazing mass of forgeries something might be saved; when a great ship is broken up even the shattered planks are worth selling. This man must know something.

It was no time for considering pride and the bitterness of surrender. Madame Elveda made up her mind that her cousin was the only man who could advise at this juncture. She would go to him. "You are my cousin," she would say. "You offered to advise me if I ever wanted advice. Advise me now. You warned me to look into my affairs. I have neglected your advice; now read this letter and advise me. If you can help me or advise me, I shall be grateful." She remembered that in her safe lay a bundle of documents, some of them never disturbed since her marriage, among which was a schedule of all her investments. She ordered her carriage, she took out this bundle of documents, and she went to her room to put on her bonnet.

Then she remembered her daughter. "Poor Francesca!" she sighed. "It matters nothing now, whether she takes up the Cause or not. It would have been better for her had she married Harold."

She got into her carriage—calm and cold as usual to outward show.

"To Mortimer Street, Regent Street—Mr. Angelo's."

CHAPTER XXV

"Change
Into something rich and strange."

"I HAVE just received your letter, Francesca, the only letter you have written to me since you came here—the only letter. Faithless!"

"Forgive me, Harold. I have broken my promise, I know. I promised I would go on writing as I used to do, but—"

"But what, Francesca? Have I unwittingly offended?"

"No, no; how could you offend me, Harold? We are only offended with people whom we do not trust. It is—how long?—a fortnight since I last wrote to you. Many things may happen in a fortnight. Oh, how many things have happened to me! I have so much to tell, and yet I find it so hard to tell anything."

"Tell me what you like, Francesca. Let us get out of this little box of a room." They were in the little parlor-music-breakfast-dining-study-studio room, and it was about seven in the evening, but Nelly had no pupils. "Let us get where we can talk. I observed through the back door a large and pleasantly airy burial-ground. Shall we go and sit among the tombs?"

"Come into the garden. Emanuel will be there presently. We walk there every evening. In the mornings, if it is fine, the garden is his workshop. He loves to sit in the sun. But, indeed, it is not much bigger than this room."

"It is a little brighter, anyhow," said Harold, in the garden. "How wonderfully such a little slip of ground as this, with its creepers and vines and green leaves, light up these little ordinary gray-brick houses! There may be romance even in such a commonplace street as this. To be sure, you are here, which ought to be romance enough for me."

"There is romance in this very house. For here lives a girl in love with a young man. It is the play of Juliet and Romeo. Juliet ought not to think of Romeo, because he belongs to another

faction. Juliet's father is a very strict follower of his own faction. Juliet will be cut off from all her people of that faction if she marries Romeo. Juliet is completely bound and chained by love for Romeo. Unfortunately, all the romance is on her side, because Romeo isn't worth her. Romeo is a vulgar, conceited, and selfish young man. But she loves him and worships him, and she will be his slave. That seems to be all the happiness she desires."

"Have we factions here—Capulets and Montagus?"

"There are Jews and Christians. What else is wanted to make a faction? If she marries him she must leave her People and her friends. She will be a castaway. Yet she will marry him—I am sure she will. Harold, I begin to think that love is a terrible passion—it makes people do the most foolish and the most wonderful things."

"It is, indeed, a terrible passion," said Harold, gravely. "Let us pray to be delivered from it."

"Nelly loves this man"—Francesca apparently did not appreciate the humor of this remark, for she went on, gravely considering Nelly's case—"she loves this little Clerk, and she will give up everything for him, father, cousins, friends—everything. And for her he gives up nothing."

"Perhaps," said Harold, "you exaggerate the superiority of the young lady. My own experience, which is limited, in a matter so delicate, rather teaches me that like mates with like. I should think that she will not be so much pained as you are by the vulgarity, and will accept the selfishness as part of man's nature. Give the average man the chance—that is, power over anybody—and he becomes selfish naturally and immediately. And so you amuse yourself with watching a love-story?"

"I do a great deal more. Harold, I am *very* glad I came here—you know it was Clara's suggestion. She wanted to take me away from my own room and my own thoughts. I had grown unhappy. I know not why. The old things pleased me no longer. Something jarred. I was out of sympathy with my mother—and everything. Oh, it has been the greatest possible change! No one would believe that such a change could have fallen upon one. I wonder if it will last."

"What kind of change has it been?" Harold asked, seriously.

"I understand so much more, to begin with. You see, Harold, you know us so well that you can understand—we have had no ties to connect us with the world. My mother severed all those ties when she left my father: so that the whole world has been to me like a masquerade played below the hotel windows for my amusement. I never found out how unreal things were until *you*," she hesitated for a moment and then went on frankly, meeting his eyes—"until you put a question to me, which made me—afterwards—ask myself all kinds of questions."

"I am devoutly grateful then," said Harold.

"Another reason was the fact that we are so horribly rich—that separates us from everybody else. Other rich people have estates, lands, relations, dependents, tenants, laborers—all kinds of responsibilities and duties and obligations. They are bound to the land and to the people. We have got just a massive lump of gold, which is alive, and grows like a tree, only without any beauty. It is bulbous in shape, and puts forth every year new bulbs; we cut off two or three and leave the rest, fresh bulbous growths every year. When will it stop?"

It had stopped that very day, only Francesca knew it not. At that very moment Mr. Aldebert Angelo was speeding on his way to Paris, to make such inquiries as might be possible to save something out of the wreck.

"Responsibilities may easily be assumed, Francesca."

"Yes, if you know things. Not if you are outside the world. Why, Harold, I have been nearly four years in England, and I know nothing. I have been three years at Newnham, yet English life—all of it—from the Queen to the pauper, has been utterly unknown to me, till I came here and saw, with my own eyes, the world that works."

"Again, I am devoutly grateful. There is nothing I have wished for you so much, Francesca, as that you should escape from your hot-house and understand the world of actuality, not that of theory."

"And then there is more in this house than a love-story. There is a Prophet here as well."

"You mean Emanuel. Yes, Francesca, if great thoughts make a Prophet, Emanuel is a Prophet. Does he make your heart to glow, and your cheek to burn, and your pulse to beat, Francesca, when he talks to you?"

"Oh, I have never seen a man like him—I have never dreamed of such a man! I come into the garden in the morning, while he works at his panel, and he talks to me. He reads my thoughts; he knows what I want him to tell me. He speaks of the greatness of Israel, his country, and"—she checked herself—"the glories of his people; the freedom of him who works with his hands; the contempt of riches. There is really—though nobody would believe it—one man in the world who wants no money. When he talks I am lifted out of myself. I forget everything. I know not where I am until he stops, and I return to earth again."

"He is a Prophet, Francesca. He should have been a great chemist but for some domestic sorrow that drove him abroad. His heart is made for love, and he is a lonely man. Therefore he is restless, and cannot stay long in one place. He has come over here in order to communicate some wonderful secret—I know not what. It may be a chemical discovery; it may be a philosophic maxim. Well, it is not his discovery that I want, but his conversation. I think when he goes away again that I shall go with him for a while. He shall carve in wood, and I will learn some other useful craft—the mending of shoes, say—so that we shall keep ourselves, if only on a modest crust, and wander from place to place, making observations. You should have heard the observations he made when he travelled with me up the valley of the Euphrates! If I had only written them down every evening!"

"I wish he would take me, too," said Francesca. "I should like nothing better. I am strong, I can walk, or perhaps you would let me have a donkey. And I will learn some useful craft for my own maintenance—say, the stringing of beads. And we will make him talk to us all day long."

"We will all three go away together. We will have a splendid time, and we will never come back. We will wander among the Arabs. You have been with them, so have I, so has Emanuel. I will become—with you—a son of Ishmael."

"There are other strange creatures in this strange place, Harold. There is a gentleman—I mean really a gentleman—who has been a sailor before the mast, and is now editor of a labor paper. Emanuel knows him too. He publishes every week a paper for working-men, which, if they would only read it and

obey, would turn the working world into a Garden of Eden. He is half sailor, half editor. His eyes look far off, like a sailor's, his fingers are inky, like an editor's; he is a gentle creature, like a sailor, and he has a horrible wife. Perhaps all editors do not have horrible wives. This dreadful person gets drunk every day. Sometimes she opens the window and screams; sometimes she rolls about the floor and screams. Her husband only says that he wanted to have the common lot, and that he has got it. His son is Nelly's lover; but between father and son—what a difference!"

"You shall take me to see this converted sailor. Is he a Socialist?"

"No; he only preaches to working-men righteousness and truth and unselfishness. They are not popular doctrines, and, in fact, nobody heeds him. Perhaps," said Francesca, not often satirical, "these qualities are too common about here to want any advocacy."

"Doubtless," said Harold. "Everywhere these things are weeds. Hence the universal happiness."

"I like him, Harold. He is such a gentle, kindly creature, with manners almost as good as Emanuel's."

"Emanuel is, if he pleases, a Grandee of Spain. He inherits hundreds of years of good manners."

They were walking up and down the narrow garden. Francesca at this point stopped suddenly. Naturally, therefore, her companion stopped as well.

"Harold, Emanuel not only taught me things that I can never forget, but he has told me something besides that will—that must—change the whole current of my future life."

"What is that?"

"Turn round, Harold. Stand opposite to me, face to face. Will you answer one question truly?"

"Truly, Francesca." He stood as she desired.

"Harold, you have known me a long time; we have been great friends always. Tell me, to what Race, what People, do I belong?"

He hesitated. "You have told me yourself, often."

"Let me hear the truth," she repeated.

"Then, you are a Jewess."

"You have known that all along?"

"All along from the very beginning. From the time when you were a girl of fourteen or so."

"And you have known all along that we have called ourselves Spanish Moors?"

"Certainly."

"Oh, I am ashamed! Why did my mother invent that story?"

"Do not think hard things about your mother, Francesca. She separated from her husband. She would not obey him. You told me this yourself. Therefore, she separated from all her People. She went so far as to deny them. She would not even acknowledge that she was a Jewess. She called you—if not herself—a Moor by descent. She said your father was a Spanish Moor; that would account for the Oriental type of your face."

"I never knew till yesterday."

"Of course you did not know. You so frankly believed in the story—you were so proud of it—that no one dared to tell you the truth. Besides, it was your mother's wish that you should be kept in ignorance."

"You knew—everybody knew—the people who come to the house, the girls at Newnham. Oh, what must they think of me? I am ashamed, Harold. I feel as if I never could go back to those people. I am sick with shame. How did you know me?"

"By your face. It is a very beautiful face, Francesca, and it is in no way disfigured, believe me, by the Seal of your People, which glorifies it."

"Emanuel told me. Yesterday—only yesterday. For the first time in my life I learned the truth. I am a Jewess. We stood before the glass, Nelly and I, and I saw, all in a moment, like a revelation, what you call the Seal of the People. Oh, there is no doubt! I saw it all over my face. But it shone like a glory, Harold."

"Why should it not be a Glory?"

"Emanuel is teaching me to be proud of my race—as proud as he is himself—I have seen their worship—before I learned the truth—their worship of rejoicing and of praise. It moved me to the heart even then, before I learned the truth. I have seen them in their houses—the old men, and the daughters, and the granddaughters. Oh, and I have seen them patient in their poverty. Oh, their dreadful, grinding poverty! I am learning—I have

everything to learn—but I am changed already, Harold. That is what I had to say to you—I am changed—I am no longer your old friend. She lived in a hot-house, surrounded by conventional things she called Art. She talked unreal stuff about women. They have made me real, because they have brought me to the world that is so real. Your old friend is dead and gone, Harold. As for her successor—"

"And the World of Woman, Francesca? Have you yet made any voyages of discovery in the World of Woman? Are you still among those who would set her free? Answer, Vashti. Answer, Rebel Queen!"

He laughed, but his eyes were serious, and his words were a command.

"The World of Woman"—she turned her head. "The World of Woman (?)—I am a Jewess now, Harold."

"And the World of Woman, Vashti?"

"Call me no more Vashti. She was a Babylonian. I am a Jewess."

"And the Jewish women, Francesca?" he persisted.

"They obey their husbands, Harold"—she dropped her voice and hung her blushing head. "They are happy because they obey the men they love!"

CHAPTER XXVI

Toujours, toujours,
Tourne la terre où moi je cours
Toujours, toujours, toujours, toujours.—*Béranger.*

I DO not know what would have happened after this avowal but for an interruption. Harold opened his lips to speak—his hand was ready, his eyes were ready—but he stepped back, for at that moment Emanuel himself appeared at the garden door, the setting sun lighting up his face. He was accompanied by the Editor of the *Friend of Labor*, Mr. Hayling. What followed after this effectually, for the time, drove all thoughts of wooing out of this young couple's heads.

Emanuel stepped forward and greeted Harold, gravely. "I am glad you have come," he said. "Francesca told me you were coming. I am glad, Harold, because the time has come when I must tell you what I have to tell—the reason why I came to England." He paused and looked around as if wondering when to begin. Then he remembered his companion and introduced him. "This is my friend Anthony, whom I knew many years ago. Then we looked forward. Now we look back. But we must never cease to look forward—never, Anthony." He laid his hand on his friend's shoulder. "What? You then wanted the Common Lot. You have had it; your prayers are granted."

"Aye." The man named Anthony, the man with the far-off eyes, had something of a despondent air—the poor man, indeed, was fresh from a prolonged struggle with his wife; a struggle in which the furniture suffered and the neighbors assisted. She was now enjoying the rest that falls soon or late upon those who are filled with strong drink. "Aye," said Anthony. "The Common Lot! I ought to be satisfied. The Common Lot! When it is over, what is there to show for it? Yet I wanted it."

"But for Anthony and this child here," Emanuel continued, "I should have communicated the thing before. They have given me other things to think about. Not that my Discovery has

ever left my thoughts for a moment; but I put it aside. Now, however, the time has come, I must say what I have to say and go wandering again. I am a nomad—a gypsy—I must wander, I am constrained to wander by the restless spirit within. Let me tell you what I have to tell; we will talk awhile about it, and then I will go."

"We are ready to listen, Emanuel," said Harold.

"I will tell it in the presence of these two as well as you. My Discovery affects Man and Woman now, and in the ages to come. You, Harold, shall stand for Man, Francesca for Woman."

Now, while he was speaking the sun went down beyond the burial-ground, and there arose the western glow and spread over a third of the sky. While he continued to speak that glow began to fade into the soft twilight of summer, and the color in the sky and the twilight a little suited the grave words of his discourse.

"I have this Thing to tell you. It is a Thing which fills my soul. I would lay it as a burden upon your shoulders. Two, at least, are young, and one is wise. I have told you that it is a great Thing, a wonderful Thing, that I have discovered. It is a Thing which most certainly will change the world, and that for benefits and blessings which my brain is too feeble to grasp or to imagine. I have glimpses, I have snatches, but in part only. You who are young shall take it into your keeping, to divulge it as you please, and to understand what the Thing will do. Having given it into your keeping, I will go."

He spoke solemnly and slowly. The exordium made his companions feel as if they were standing before the porch of a great Temple. Francesca, for her part, was ready to see the doors opened, and to obey an invitation to step within. The place—the slip of a garden, sixteen feet wide by thirty long, although it was bright with green—the greenery that flourishes in a London garden—was hardly like the Porch of a Temple. It was also incongruous that Nelly's pupil had arrived, and that from her room proceeded the tum-tum of a banjo. The notes were musical and dulcet, but they should have been the rolling of an organ. And when four persons meet for solemn consultation it is disturbing to have two boys in the next house quarrelling. One of them from the secure retreat of an upper chamber, was hurling names at his antagonist below. "T-T-T-T-om," he stammered, you're a c-c-c-c-arroty Thief!"

"Shall we talk here?" Emanuel went on. "It is but a little garden, but it is better than a little room. Besides, it opens upon this broad place—a burial-place, a place of tombs—what our People, who still preserve a remnant of their old poetic feeling, call the 'City of the Living;' yet they know not what they mean. City of the Living, truly. And around us, with its streets and houses spreads the City of the Dead. Yet you know not what that means."

"Let us talk here, Emanuel," said Francesca. There was a bench placed against the wall, with a little wooden table at the side convenient for a gentleman's pipe or glass. The girl sat upon this, while the other two stood. Emanuel leaned his elbow on the wall, which was only breast high, and looked over the broad expanse of headstones.

"The City of the Living," he repeated. "And they do not know what they mean."

"Let us talk here, Emanuel," repeated Francesca.

"We spoke, Harold, the other day of a certain conversation we had together—in the Desert. It pleased me to think that you should still remember the words of such a man as myself. Do you also remember a certain evening when we stood on the seashore beside the ruins of Tyre?"

"I remember. You were talking of the future of the world. One thinks best of the future, somehow, in presence of the past."

"Again, let us believe that we are in presence of the past. Whether the dead are those of three thousand years ago, as at Tyre, or those of yesterday, as here, it is the same. They are dead; all that is dead belongs to the past."

Harold perceived that his friend's face wore a certain look which he remembered of old—a look with exultation in it, and purpose and thought.

"There are times," Emanuel went on, "when one must speak. He who works alone and thinks alone presently lights upon things—thoughts—discoveries—which he cannot choose but communicate to some one. When you and I, my friend, first began to talk I had many things to say—they were the result of long and solitary meditations—but to the Bedouin around me I could say nothing, because they could comprehend nothing. When I had told you what I had to say the brain was cleared. It is strange; a man discovers something—a law, a principle, the control of a

Force. Until he has told this Discovery he can attempt no other work; when he has given it away he keeps it still; but his brain is cleared, he can go on. What I have to tell you, my friends, concerns a Discovery which will be reckoned, from the moment when it is divulged, one of the great things in the world's history. I have given it to you already, Harold. You have it set down in writing. It is in that sealed packet in your keeping."

Now, since Emanuel opened up the matter, Harold had naturally been thinking over the thing with a languid curiosity. Knowing the nature of the man and his philosophy, ever dreamy, he supposed that his wonderful Discovery amounted to some social nostrum—some humanitarian maxim. He came, therefore, prepared to receive the nostrum, and to observe the confidence of an enthusiast.

"Let us all hear, Emanuel, what it is."

"Presently—presently." He looked out again upon the tombstones, and began in a gentle voice and in short sentences, as if remembering things bit by bit. "We were standing, Harold, beside the sea-shore; before us were the glittering waves, above us the moon, behind us the fragments of the ancient civilization—once that of my forefathers, for it was part and parcel of the Hebrew civilization. We talked—we talked—my heart was opened. You constrained me to speak; it is your gift to make men speak. The opening of the heart of man is like the opening of the Holy of Holies."

—"I remember that night perfectly."

"I told you many things—you were young. It is a great happiness to pour ideas into a young man's brain."

"Has your Discovery anything to do with what you then discovered?"

"Nothing—everything. You shall see; I should not wonder—wait a little."

Again he paused. Then a very strange thing happened to two at least of his listeners. Once before the same thing had happened to one of them. It was on that evening when Harold stood with Emanuel, with the ruins on one side and the sea on the other. For, then the surroundings vanished suddenly. The sea-shore, the ruins, the clashing of the waves—they all vanished, and the speakers were left alone in space.

Here the same thing happened again. The voices of the street

became silent; its footsteps were hushed. The impertinent banjo stopped; the two quarrelling boys were heard no more; the houses, the little garden, the enclosing walls, all vanished. Francesca, comparing notes later on with Harold, declared that the same thing had happened to her. Looking into the face of the speaker, she saw nothing but what he told her to see; she heard nothing but his voice, and what he wished her to hear.

"Let us stand," said Emanuel, "in the Burial-place of all the Dead since the world began."

Francesca looked around. She seemed to see a vast plain, stretching out in all directions to the horizon. There were no trees, no hills, no signs of man; the plain was covered with innumerable little grave-mounds, as an old man's face is marked with innumerable lines and crows'-feet. There were no birds; gray clouds covered the sky; it was evening; the breeze was chill. That she should be standing in such a place did not seem strange. She was there to learn something; she seemed to herself to look around. And she listened.

"All the Dead," Emanuel repeated, solemnly—"all the Dead since the world began are here. It is hundreds of thousands of years since Man appeared. Here are millions and millions of those who have lived and died. Here is their dust; their works are our inheritance. This you know. We are the heirs, you say, of all the ages. But listen. The bones and dust which lie around us are more than the remains of dead men past and gone. They are all that is left of the shells which once were ourselves. These are not the Dead; they are the shells that once belonged to those who are living now. We are ourselves the Dead. The Living are those who have been, who are, and are to come. There are no Dead. Generation follows generation; each seems different from its predecessor; the generations have no memory of the past, but they are the same. There are no Dead. Those who die do but change their shells. Perhaps—it may be—there is a conscious space of rest. This I know not. Perhaps we sleep awhile; I know not. We shall learn some day, perhaps. We shall learn it when we have learned what happens in the spirit world. And of that no knowledge—not the least glimpse or sign—has ever been allowed to reach us. Neither to Moses nor to David, not to any of the Prophets, was there revealed what happens after that change which we call Death. Yet that the spirit

lies not senseless in the grave they knew full well and taught. There is no Death. We seem to die when we have run our course, and done our work for the time, and worn out our shell. But we only go away in order to begin again. There are no Dead, my friends. There are no Dead. Remember that. Men know not this thing; they think that the soul goes away by itself to join other souls in the heaven or the hell of their own creation. They think there are myriads and myriads of souls — new souls created continually since man began. Yet the truth has been revealed. If only men would listen with understanding! Is it not written? 'In Death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?' And again, 'Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave.' Therefore this is no new thing that I tell you, but a thing revealed unto Moses and the Prophets. We are ourselves the dead. We are ourselves the heirs of our own deeds. We heap together the good and the bad—for ourselves to inherit; we sow the fatal seeds which shall spring up in new diseases and new agonies; for ourselves we commit crimes, thinking that they will never be found out; they bring miseries and shames for the third and fourth generations—upon ourselves. We invent and discover; we compel the forces of nature to work for us; it is for our successors to reap the harvest of our labors; those who succeed are—ourselves. We know not when or where, under what guise, the soul will reappear; perhaps in our grandsons; perhaps in strange guise; in a distant land; one may inherit the wisdom of the East or the craft of the West; one may be a Malay, a Chinese, a Polynesian, a negro. Whatever we are, ours is the inheritance of the world as we ourselves have made it. We work, we gather, or we spoil for those who follow. And those who follow are—ourselves. We who live are the whole of humanity. The hope of the future — for ourselves; the hope of mankind—that is, for ourselves—lies in the wisdom of the present; the curse of the future — for ourselves — is the folly of the present — for ourselves. These things being so," the Preacher went on, with a change of voice, "what man is so great as he who advances the whole world? Some there are who proclaim great teachings, which are discourses, or revelations. They are the Prophets. We have Moses and Isaiah. Other nations have had Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed. They are few in number, and I suppose that there will be no more Prophets. Why should

there be more Prophets? All that is wanted for the elevation of man has been uttered. It remains only for him to understand. Some there are who invent or discover things of science. Of these there are many; they destroy space, they arrest pain, they cure disease, they spread knowledge more and more. Knowledge is not wisdom; yet without knowledge wisdom cannot grow. There are some who become poets; they make the words of the Prophets intelligible to the people; and there are some who advance mankind by the simple spectacle of an unselfish life. But then, again, man is individual; he is selfish; he will work for himself and for his children, but he can see no further; his imagination does not go beyond what he can see. Bid the ordinary man work for humanity; he laughs. Humanity is a phantom, a simulacrum; what does he care for humanity? Make him, however, if you can, understand that he is working for himself; show him his successor — himself — weighed down by the evils of his own creation. Then—if he can comprehend this thing—a new conception of creation will arise within him. Out of his own selfishness he will become unselfish; because he would save himself in the future he will spare others in the present." He stopped again. His companions made no reply.

"All this, Harold, and more, I showed you on that night standing upon the Phœnician ruins. While we talked there the past returned. We became, I remember, two Phœnicians; we became our own ancestors; we were two living Phœnician merchants; before us the galleys swept out to sea, the trading-ships moved slowly, each under one great sail; behind us was the city itself."

"I remember — I remember." Harold's voice to Francesca sounded hollow and far away. "Then we were by the sea-side. Now we are in the burial-place of all the Dead."

"There are moments—flashes—when the past returns. Once, therefore, you were yourself a Phœnician. You saw yourself—two thousand years ago. Thus you may understand how you are bound to the past and how you control the future — you — with your own hand. You have been king, warrior, statesman, poet, peasant, slave, malefactor. All the cruelties and crimes of the world you have yourself committed and suffered. You are yourself the Humanity of the past stained with every crime. You are yourself the Humanity of the future rising slowly—slowly—to

the perfect manhood intended by the Creator when He made man in the image of Himself."

"All this," said his disciple, "you have told me already. Yet I like to hear it told again — and in this place—in this Burial-place." His voice dropped to a murmur, because he was under the charm of this man's voice, wherein lay the magic possessed by him whom we foolishly call the mesmerizer.

"We come; we stay awhile; we do our work; we go away; we inherit our own works. Some day I will set down in a book—a very little book will do—the history of the progress of the world: how we have now stepped forward and now fallen back; history is a continual advance and a continual falling back; mostly, something is gained; mostly, the slow advance has been in a right direction. A very little book will do for my chronicle. Would you look back? You see yourself a naked savage, alone; then you have left the forest; you have found out how to make fire; you are clothed with a skin; presently you are living in a city, you have acquired arts. But all through the ages you are yourself—always yourself. And you are working for yourself—always yourself. You are one immortal individual life—one indestructible soul—living through all these centuries. When did you begin? When will you end? Had you any beginning? Can you have an end? In half-blind perception of this continued life men sometimes reverence their ancestors. They might as well worship their posterity.

"You of Western Europe," Emanuel continued, "live in a world which does not meditate. Therefore, the unseen things—the only real things—are to you impossible and unreal. It is in the East that the real things are understood. Here, in your material world—your wealth and luxury—you live in a Palace built of cards, which will fall to pieces at the first rough wind. I think it will fall to pieces very soon. What we ourselves shall inherit from the modern worship of wealth — what mental distortions, blindness, physical weaknesses — I know not; I tremble only to think of what is coming upon the world—upon ourselves. Enough. And now, my friends, remember, we do not die — there is no Death. So you will be best prepared for the consideration with larger minds of my Discovery and its Consequences."

He stopped. Then the surroundings came back—the little garden, the cemetery, the little house behind, and the tum-tum of the

banjo, and the squabble of the boys. Francesca looked about her. Where was the Great Plain? Where was the Burial-place of all the Dead since ever the world began? Gone. But Emanuel was left, and Mr. Hayling with brightened eyes, and Harold with glowing cheeks, and herself with beating heart and eager eyes, and all her face aflame!

CHAPTER XXVII

Grim-visaged War hath smoothed his wrinkled front
Richard III.

"Thus, from generation to generation, do all things interest and concern ourselves," Emanuel continued. "Remember that; and now you are prepared for my Discovery."

"Is it a Physical Discovery?"

"Surely. It is only by Physical Discoveries that the world is prepared to understand the things unseen. Men who are ignorant understand nothing but terror. Most men of the present day understand little besides Terror. Here and there, among the better sort, there are enlargements. What we have said here would not be understood at all by the people in this street. Let us take one of our neighbors, some good man who worships with his household in church every Sunday. I say to him, 'The Lord created the whole world, The Lord put man into it, saying: "Find out for yourself how good it is. Whatever you find out you shall have for your very own enjoyment in your next life. The world is full of secrets—search for them. And of forces—conquer them. Thousands of years may pass before you find out anything. Wait. You will always be restless, not knowing why. After thousands of years you shall begin to discover, and you shall then begin to enjoy. Always you will be the same man."' What would our average man understand of such a message? You might as well ask him to understand the Prophet Isaiah—or the Integral Calculus. But we are all blind, more or less. How can we teach the world to clear its eyes and see? Oh!" he threw out his arms, "we want a keener sight; we must have it—we must get it—somehow, we must! For want of a stronger sight the clouds that we have partly driven back keep closing round us again—not altogether. No . . . that cannot be."

"And your Discovery?" said Francesca.

The Discoverer seemed in no hurry to announce his great find.

He went on leading slowly up to it by many winds and turns. "When I fully apprehended the truth—it was my first discovery—about the past and the future of mankind, I could at first think of nothing else. It held me with a firm grip. I went about reeling with the weight and grandeur of it; I could at first think of nothing else. It made me do foolish things. I wasted time in the futile task of looking for myself in the past. I looked for myself—such was my vanity—among the great men of old. I placed myself beside them—I fancied I found myself here and there. Whenever there was a great thing done I thought I might have done it. Vain and foolish! I should have understood from the first that it is better to do something in the present than to persuade myself that I had done something in the past. Besides, among all the millions on the earth a thousand years ago, what chance was there of finding any single soul? So I gave up considering the past, and I turned to the present and the future."

"That was before you met me?" said Harold.

"Seventeen years before. It was soon after my great trouble fell upon me. I first thought of going away in order to forget it; soon after I lost my wife, whom I loved," he explained, gently. "Then I realized that wherever I travelled I should be only surveying and exploring my own inheritance—mine. This made the world far more interesting. I had no money, but I wanted none. Our People are everywhere, and I had my art—my trade. All over the world men are ready to buy things carved in wood. It is a most useful trade; by means of it I could keep myself and could get passed on from house to house, from city to city. In this way, walking, riding, being carried, I have wandered about—I hardly know where. Everywhere I have wandered contemplating man—myself—and thinking what should be done for man—myself—to abate his sufferings—my sufferings—in the future. I saw what I should have to become, and I began to consider carefully what I could do that would be best for them."

"And your Discovery?" Francesca repeated, expectant. What had he discovered worthy of this long preamble?

"It was not yet made. My mind was vague. All I considered then was the vast future stretching out before me, and the slow upward march of man in which I should join. I perceived, further, that the world is not yet ripe for receiving this revelation. The substitution of hope for terror; of general for individual ad-

vance; to think of death as only an occasional incident, perhaps causing a little physical pain for the moment; to consider all mankind in every generation as working for themselves in the next generation—this would be too much for the world to receive. Even for myself, it was as much as I could clearly grasp. Even now, after years of meditation, I am always discovering new aspects of the truth."

"It would be enough for most men," said Mr. Hayling.

"Yes, but another thought began to take shape. It became an intense longing with me to do something that the whole world should feel. At first one does not consider the presumption of the thing; it seems even a small thing to ask; the vanity of believing one's self capable of such a thing does not at the outset present itself. When, however, I understood the greatness of the thing, and the presumption of asking it, I became ashamed; and then I prayed daily that at least I might never by word or deed say or do aught that might hinder the march of man. Even the lowest and the meanest can do something, just by leading an honest life, to advance the world. Great is the power of simple honesty, which, besides, is everywhere so rare—so rare."

He paused again. Once more that strange feeling, as of faintness, stole over his listeners. For the second time that evening Francesca lost the sense of the place, and seemed to stand where she had been told to stand, upon the Burial-place of all the Dead.

"What, in short, should a man attempt for the good of the world? Ask yourselves this question. What would you give the world if you were permitted to give it something? First of all, you think—everybody begins with this—life is too short, especially for those who inquire. Well, you would lengthen life. Think of the gratitude of man—man of the present—if you were to give him another hundred years—and yet another—and another? Consider, next, how would he spend that additional span? He would live, then, as he lives now; length of life would not change his nature; he would go on getting more money; he would go on sweating his employés and cheating; he would be discontented because he had to work, and could not feast all day long. Would the world be advanced by lengthening man's life? Not a whit; length of days, I say, would not change man's nature. With such a long period before him he would only desire all the more

vehemently the things, the animal things, which he now desires so ardently."

"Life should not be lengthened," said Harold, "for the general herd. Perhaps, however, in the case of the deserving. . . ."

"No—no. There can be no exceptions. Men must be taken altogether. Well, you would say next that there is too much disease; you would destroy disease. Well. But what does pain do for man? At least it now keeps him always in recognition of his own imperfections; it gives him sympathies; it makes him brave; it stimulates him to the increase of knowledge. Would the destruction of pain, with all these consequences, make man braver and stronger and less selfish? Not so. Men, as men now are, would only become harder. They would fear no consequences; they would care nothing for others. No, no; we must suffer men to be tortured with pain for many thousands of years yet to come. We may avert one disease after another, but still a new one will spring up."

"Good," said Harold, "we will leave disease to the doctors."

"Then there are gifts material. The chemist will quite certainly, some day, confer upon man a kind of food costing nothing and within the reach of all. He might, and he will, increase the fertility of the soil enormously; these things will shorten the hours of labor. Then the electrician might—and he will—enable men to travel round the world in an hour; any of these things may any day be done for the world; but if you think, any of these things would only increase the evils that exist. They will not come until men are ready for them. Then, all—all—everything that can be imagined will come; but gradually—not till the world becomes ready for each successive step will it be granted to the world; not till then will it be permitted. In the fulness of time man shall be allowed to live for two hundred, three hundred, five hundred years. Think you that the age of the Patriarchs is set down falsely? Oh, we know not—mind of man cannot conceive—what shall be done by science in the future, by man for man, by man for himself, his own successors! But not suddenly; gradually, as man's nature advances, step by step, sometimes after thousands of years, for we advance so slowly—we keep ourselves back so obstinately. In the fulness of time disease and sickness shall be stories of the past. Then at last man will become less, not more, selfish as we relieve him of pain

and suffering. Life shall be prolonged—how long? I know not what limit shall ultimately be placed. Of the things good for man there shall be plenty for all. There shall be neither rich nor poor. All our senses shall be sharpened to a degree we cannot even understand; compared with the music of the future, our own will be but as the drone of the savage's pipe. My friends, I faint, I fall sick with yearning—only to think of what the world shall be in the years to come, in the far-off generations yet to come. Oh, you and I will meet somewhere in that world, and we will recall this evening beside the graveyard where we talked of these things, and our hearts were uplifted with our talk."

He paused, his eyes rapt. Presently the Prophet went on again.

"What then should a man attempt? Surely his best gift would be something by which it will be made more possible for man to advance. Think of the dead—ourselves—through all the ages. What have they been doing? They tilled the earth, they kept cattle, they made wine; they loved, they lay down with disease, they died. What else? Why, my friends, they fought—they fought—they fought incessantly. Disease killed them by thousands, even by tens of thousands. They paid no heed; it seemed to them as if fevers and agues were necessary things. What they thought about was War. What they talked about was War. They thought of War all their lives; they think of War now. For one man who thinks of Peace, there are a dozen who think of War."

"But War is going out," said Mr. Hayling. "There has been no great war for sixteen years. Perhaps there will be no more War."

"There are at this moment, Anthony, fifteen millions of men in civilized countries under drill and in arms! There have been great wars in this century, in Russia, China, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Greece, France, Germany, Denmark, Austria, the United States, Mexico, South America, Africa, India—that is to say, over nearly the whole of the globe. And you think there will be no more wars? For every single man who is working in the laboratory, or in the hospital, or in the library, there are now a hundred working in the barracks upon drill of men and weapons of precision. Yet you think there will be no more War."

"We hope that the very magnitude of the armaments will keep off war."

"That is the saying of smooth things. Was there no magnitude of armaments in 1870 and in 1876? Did that magnitude keep off War? No, my friends, War will begin again, and that before long. War frightful, terrible, far spreading. But there is at least a chance—nay, a certainty. You may prevent it, Harold, if you choose."

"I? How can I?"

"I am in my sober senses. You are a chemist. You shall destroy War—you—for the whole future of the world there shall be no more War. I will enable you to destroy War—nothing less—to make War not only mad, which it always has been, but impossible. Do you hear? Impossible!"

"How?"

"By my Discovery. You three people—my friends—do not believe me. Very well, I repeat: it has been granted to me—to me, of all mankind—to discover that which shall forever abolish the greatest evil of all that afflicts the world. To me, I say. Better and wiser men should have found out this simple thing. They had noble laboratories to work in; I had a spirit-lamp and a few bottles in an upper chamber borrowed of a physician in Cairo. Yet it was no chance discovery. Had it been so, I should have called it a revelation direct from the Lord. For that matter, every good thing that comes direct, or that grows gradually in the brain, is by inspiration. I perceive, when I look back, that the germ of it had lain in my mind unsuspected for many years. I told you how the secret was near being lost while the Russians drove me across their accursed country—enough of that."

"In Heaven's name, Emanuel, what is your Discovery?" cried Harold.

"In Heaven's name I will tell you," returned Emanuel, solemnly. "What I have discovered is nothing short—I repeat—nothing short of the abolition of war—the instant abolition of war this moment.

"Well—well—but how? How? Speak, man!"

"The abolition of war, the destruction of the military spirit, the end of fighting. You laugh—incredulous as Sarai. The end of fighting. Man has fought without ceasing since we first began to watch him; to be a man is still to be a soldier; henceforth, he will fight no more. I have told you three of my Discovery because I want you to consider what it means. Follow

me for a moment. Fifteen millions of soldiers to begin with, will return to civil life; conscription will be at an end; military service will be no more required; the heavy burden of taxation will cease; the vast sums now collected for war will be used for peace; the sword shall be turned into a pruning-hook; and the thought and work which are expended upon war will now be turned to things of peace. Rid of this incubus at last, the world will be free to march on."

"Tell me, Emanuel, without more words. Quick! You have beaten about the bush long enough. Tell me now!"

"Yes, I will tell you. As for you two, you are not chemists." He drew out a pocket-book, and found in it a paper inscribed with certain diagrams and letters of chemical formulæ. "You understand that, of course?"

"Of course," said Harold.

He added a few more letters. "And that?"

"Certainly."

"Then," he said, "if I add this, and this, and this, we have a formula which you will begin to understand."

Harold considered for a few moments. As he looked at the letters his color changed; his cheek grew pale in the twilight; his hand trembled. "Good Heavens!" he cried at last. "I begin to understand."

"To-morrow I will make a few experiments with you in your laboratory.

"Good Heavens!" Harold repeated, his eyes fixed on the paper. "Yes, I see what might be the result; we will try—we will try to-morrow."

"What is it?" cried Francesca. "Explain it, Harold."

"What it means," Emanuel himself explained, is this. "In future any one man armed with the weapon which I propose to present to the whole world, may at a safe distance—himself unseen—destroy a whole army, a whole camp, a whole city, a whole fleet. One man will be able to do this. What do you say, Harold?"

"It may be so. As yet, I can hardly grasp the meaning of the thing. Yet it would seem so. One man. Then one man may meet an army; one man may fight for a whole nation."

It was midnight before their conversation stopped. In vain Nelly summoned them to supper; they would not listen, they

would not break up their talk. Nelly sat down by herself, and presently went to bed, but still they talked in the garden beside the Burial-place of all the Dead, and projected a world of universal peace.

"When at last Francesca left them still talking, and stole away to her own room, it was with a beating heart and a burning cheek. For they alone, that little company of four, held in their hands the secret of that Universal peace for which, all the world over, men do fondly pray. The words she had heard—the things she had learned—burned in her heart like coals of fire; a Voice cried aloud within her brain, so that she alone heard it, saying ancient words—words that were familiar, she had heard them before, somewhere—all the words that ever we have heard may come back to us some time or other. "Sing, O Heavens!" cried the Voice within her. "Sing, O Heavens! and be joyful, O earth! Sing unto the Lord a new song. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; the Earth shall cast out the Dead. The whole Earth is at rest and is quiet."

An hour later Harold, too, left the garden, and so out of the house.

In the course of time he found himself in the smoking-room of his Club. It was half-past one.

"How did I get here?" he asked. "This Club-room, I now perceive, is only part of the Palace of Make-believe. I have been out of it into the land of the Real. I have seen the Past and the Future, and this Discovery—this awful Discovery, this great and terrible Discovery! What shall be done with it? How shall we handle this terrible and awful Thing?"

CHAPTER XXVIII

"Allons, enfants de la Patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé!"

It was long past midnight when Francesca, unable to sleep, for this Voice within her which continued to cry aloud in her brain and for the disquiet of her thoughts, threw open the window of her room and sat before it, drawing back the hanging branches of the Virginia-creeper. There was no moon, but it was not a dark night; the sky was clear; the summer twilight lay over the graves and white tombs of the broad burial-ground; the air was quite still, there were no noises of carts or tramping feet from road or street; all the people in the house—all the people in all the streets all around her—were asleep.

In the room below her, Nelly, kept long awake with the thought of what she meant to do on the morrow, had cried herself to sleep. Even the Great Inventor, who had made her one of the conspiracy against the arbitration of war, slept the sleep of the righteous. Francesca alone was waking. Now, in the dead of night, to be sleepless in a house is to be alone in the world. She sat at the open window, and she gazed into the peaceful night full of bewildering thoughts. Had it been possible she would willingly have inclined her heart to thoughts more fit for youth. Her lover had come back to her—this persistent lover who would not take No for an answer. He had come back, this importunate young man, always with the same question of his, as if he thought about nothing else; he had come back, and even before his question could be put, before he had time to ask that question, she had answered it by a confession. And then, just as Winged Love was visible flying about them, shooting darts and wounding hearts, and laughing aloud for joy, there appeared this Prophet—the Prophets of the present day are all physicists, chemists, and inquirers into the Laws of Nature—and rudely brushed away poor Love, and talked of mighty issues, the deathlessness of the Soul,

and the dearth of Humanity, and the abolition of War. How could an insignificant girl, after such an evening, after such a discussion, think about Love and her own happiness? How could she think of herself at all, after discourse for three long hours on themes so great? All the things that she had heard that night lay in her brain, and appeared to her one upon the other. Woman, it is true, does not create, but she shapes and moulds, and sometimes makes things change in a most surprising manner. She perceives what is going to happen, she watches Man the Inventor at his work, and she foretells—except in the case of her own children, when she is mercifully allowed to be blind—she foretells exactly what will come to pass; always and before everything else, woman is a witch; she pretends to read the hand; she pretends to read the stars; she pretends to read the cards. Crafty woman! For she reads the soul. She watches a man, and she perceives which way he walks, and what will be his goal. Under the midnight sky Francesca put forth the powers of her sex. She saw Emanuel the Inventor at his work, and, womanlike, she began slowly at first, and painfully, to read the future—to understand what would follow.

All night she sat at the window, her head wrapped in something white and soft, just as she had sat four years agone at a window in a certain hotel, where she watched the Procession of mankind, and listened to the Voice of the crowd. It was the same crowd that passed before her now, only mixed with another crowd which arose from the tombs and joined their living brethren. The crowd took shape; it became a vast army. All the soldiers who had ever fought and fallen in the battles of the world—millions, countless millions of men marched before her; all the living armies of the world tramped across the Plain in endless line, carrying spears and swords, bows and arrows, guns and bayonets. And a Voice cried, "Halt!" Then in a moment all stood still. And the Voice went on, "Lo! War shall be no more. War is ended. There shall be no more war. For a child shall destroy an army, and a little child shall destroy a mighty City. Ye shall fight no more." Then the soldiers, sighing and sorrowful, for they loved War and feared not the agony of wounds, nor did they dread the chance of death, began with one consent to turn their swords into reaping-hooks, until there were more reaping-hooks than fields to reap, and their spears into ploughshares,

until there were more ploughshares than acres to plough. They cut the parchment from the drums and gave it to the lawyers—there was enough for many generations of lawyers. The drums themselves they turned into firewood, and no more wood was cut for a hundred years. The armorers broke up the helmets and breastplates and cuisses into scrap-iron, and no more iron ore was put into the furnace for a thousand years. The guns they melted down to gun-metal, out of which they made door-handles and bells and fire-stoves for all the houses in the world; so wonderful and so plentiful were the muniments of war.

Francesca stood by and looked on. She was the woman who waits at home while her lover and her brother go forth to fight; she was the woman who prays without ceasing for their safety; she was the woman who nurses the wounded, the woman who makes the lint; she was the woman who welcomes the victors when they come home again—ragged and scarred, but triumphant. She looked on and listened, and presently she spoke. "Oh, I have waited for this day since the world began for man and woman. At last! my bleeding heart will bleed no more. There shall be no more war—my father, my lover, my brother! You will stay with me at home and work in peace." But, alas! these soldiers of all the ages, instead of rejoicing because they would not have to go out any more to be killed and mutilated, burst into passionate lamentations. "Give us back," they cried, "give us back our swords! Beat the drum again and blow the bugle. Without the joy of battle we shall become cowards; we shall be like the worms of the earth, we shall do nothing; we shall sink and fall. Manhood will perish—we shall sink and fall. Give us back, once more, the Way of War!"

Such ingratitude can men display towards him who bestows the choicest blessings!

In the morning she came down pale, silent, and agitated. Had she not been *distraite* she could not have failed to perceive that Nelly's face was stained with tears and her eyes red; that she hung her head over the teacups and said not one word. Emanuel, for his part, looked like a man who has accomplished some great task; his eyes were satisfied; his work for the moment was done; nay, he might have been satisfied with that one piece of work. Surely to abolish War forever—to make it impossible—enough for one short life. He would be justly entitled th

of his days to repose and to meditate. By meditation the wise man of the East grows in wisdom. He blessed the bread and brake it. He sat down in silence and took his tea, and in silence that breakfast was concluded.

After breakfast Francesca joined Emanuel in the garden, where he was completing a panel. Strange and incongruous! The man who was about to abolish War was finishing a little piece of carving with a file and some sandpaper.

"Master," Francesca began, timidly, "I have been awake most of the night—who could sleep after such a discourse as yours!—thinking over all you told us."

"Yes, child; I saw that you were moved, and I was glad. So was Harold."

"It was all new to me—the soul that passes on from life to life, reaping for itself that which itself has sown; the man that works always for himself and suffers, or is helped according to his work; it is so great a thing that it dazzled and bewildered me—that alone. I have never been taught any religion. I was told that when I grew up I could think and read and consider and choose for myself. I had never imagined anything so wonderful and so grand as this great and endless continuity of existence. I had always thought myself an ephemeral and insignificant creature, born yesterday, living to-day, and dying to-morow. You make me part of the world."

"Yes; we are, one and all, part and parcel of the Eternal world."

"And then while I was still overwhelmed with the greatness of a Revelation which fills me with happiness unspeakable, and lifts up my soul so that I feel transformed, you tell me what you have done for us, and for our children—that is, for ourselves. I was so full of wonder that I could not sleep; I could not lie down. I sat at the window, and Visions came to me. Master, you are a magician; you change my thoughts; you change my heart; you fill me with new things. Yet this Vision terrified me."

"Go on, child. Tell me all."

"Oh, it was all so wonderful, so wonderful! No more War, and the world to work at nothing henceforth but the advance of the Reign of Righteousness."

"The cry of the nations," said Emanuel, looking up from his work, "shall be silenced. No more slaughter, no more waste of

war." Emanuel laid down his tools and stood up to talk. "In every Christian church, in every synagogue, in every mosque, in every heathen temple, day after day, year after year, generation after generation, goes up the same prayer. In the English Church they pray, 'Give us peace in our time, O Lord,' and they ask to be kept 'from battle, murder, and from sudden death.' In the Hebrew Prophets the worst evil of any is the invasion of the armed host. They constantly promise peace as the greatest blessing to the faithful. 'They shall no more be the prey of the Heathen,' said Ezekiel. 'Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders,' says Isaiah. 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' These are the words of Micah. Yes. Violence shall be no more heard in our borders. To be the instrument whereby the prophecies of Israel's prophets are fulfilled; is it not a great thing, child?"

"It is so great a thing that it takes away my breath. Oh, to think that here, in this obscure spot of London, there is a man who can make War impossible for all future time! Men will leave off fighting. It is so great a thing, that I hardly dare even to tell you what terrified me in my vision."

"Nay, child, speak out all that is in your mind. It is by speech that we gather from each other understanding. You have some doubt in your mind."

"Have I the presumption to doubt?"

"Confess your doubts, child. I will be your father-confessor, and resolve your difficulties and absolve your sins. What is your doubt?"

"I could not control the vision, Emanuel. It shaped itself." Then she told him—thus and thus it happened.

"In this Vision," said Emanuel, "you have seen things suggested by your ignorance and your want of faith. You cannot understand the change of heart that belongs to the Reign of Peace. To begin with, it will be a world of righteousness. That is implied in all the Prophets. Righteousness and Justice will reign; there will be peaceful industry, with light and easy work for all, with such a spread of knowledge as we cannot imagine; with such a thirst for knowledge as we have never yet seen; with the abolition of disease; with the lengthening of life far beyond the Patriarchal term; with such deep and prolonged and sus-

tained research into the hidden things in Nature, and such discoveries as no one yet—no, not even a poet—has been able so much as to see in dim and mysterious Vision. At present, when a man has acquired all the knowledge that he can, when he is at his wisest and best, he has to die. What becomes of the accumulations of knowledge in his brain? Are they lost to the world? I know not. Yet I know that heat may be dissipated but not destroyed. Why not then the knowledge that a man acquires? Child! There are no bounds—none—which we can dare to set to the march of Humanity, when War shall be no more. I cannot trust myself to put into words the Vision of that future. And it will be brought about by my agency—mine—mine—mine. I have no children to rejoice in their father, therefore I give it to Harold and I go away, and am presently lost among the countless dead—lost and forgotten. But the Thing remains."

He spoke with far more animation than in the evening. Yet his words failed to move the girl. His voice, rich and soft and musical, rose and fell. He stood before her using such gesture as becomes a great and solemn subject. Yet he moved her not. Why should he move her so deeply in the evening, yet in the morning could not move her a whit? She waited for the responsive lifting of her heart, but none came.

He passed his hand before his eyes as one who is blinded by light. "It is the vision which was granted to Isaiah, were my eyes able to bear that glory. He saw in that vision that a time would come when a Man should be as a hiding-place from the wind, and when princes shall rule in judgment. It would be after many and evil days—how many days have we waited since that vision was proclaimed? How many evil days have we endured? At last it should come, and the work of righteousness should be peace—peace, child—and the people should dwell in quiet resting-places. The Oriental speaks of rest, because to him labor in the hot sun is wearisome; here the Prophet would speak of work undisturbed, because in this land, where the sun warms but does not burn, labor is a joy, but it must be labor undisturbed by war, or violence, or injustice."

Still, she was not moved. She felt ashamed of her coldness; she thought of the evening, and wondered why. "You shame me, Master. I cannot rise to your height; I will say nothing more. It would only pain you if I were to speak what is in my mind."

"Nay, child. Your eyes are still full of trouble. Like the King, you are haunted by your dream. You should be carried away by the picture of this new Heaven and new Earth, but you are not touched. Doubt troubles you."

"If I may speak, then. But you are so wise, you will understand, you will forgive. The world, you say, to begin with, must be a world of righteousness. But, to begin with, Master, it is very far as yet from being a world of righteousness. Everybody tells me that the world is full of greed, thievery, cunning, and lies. I see the poor people slaving for their livelihood to make others rich. Oh, what things have I learned since I came here! Why, before you taught me, before I saw with eyes, I knew nothing—nothing. And yet they wanted me to speak and write; they wanted ME — actually ME, the most ignorant person in all the world—to write and speak and argue about the problems of human life! I knew nothing. And now, being only on the threshold, I seem to know so much, though what I know is little indeed. I ought not to speak even in a whisper. The world is full of wickedness, is it not?"

"It is. Every man fights for himself. Order and law are maintained, so that every man, undisturbed, may overreach his neighbors. In savagery every man was an enemy of every other man, without law; in civilization every man is an enemy of every other man under the protection of the law."

"Every man fights," Francesca repeated. "That is why my soldiers cried and lamented. You have taken away from them the fighting instinct. What they meant, I think, was that man who fights, is man who makes and invents and leads and excels. Without the fighting instinct, would he be a man any longer? He would be a woman; and most women"—to these depths had Francesca fallen!—"desire nothing more than to sit down and make the best of what they have. Man must fight, said my soldiers, or the world will stand still. This is the only reason that I can understand why my soldiers lamented at the laying down of their arms."

"You are not able at once to grasp the whole meaning of things," said Emanuel, somewhat coldly.

"No; but this morning I have been thinking again, and trying to picture a world of unusual peace. And oh! my Master, to me it is not the world of the Prophets. The arsenals are left to de-

cay; the guns are honeycombed with rust; the soldiers are disbanded. No more war; no more fighting. The very schoolboys not allowed to fight. A world filled with men who can no longer fight or defend themselves. Will they cease to prey upon each other?"

"The Reign of Peace is the Reign of Righteousness."

"The Reign of Peace will begin to-day. Will the Reign of Righteousness begin also to-day? The men I see are no longer what we call men; they have lost their gallant bearing. They can no longer walk upright; there is no resolution in their looks. They have lost the sense of honor, because honor grew up with the necessity of fighting. Is it not too soon for your Discovery? Must we not make the world righteous before we give it Peace? What will become of a world full of wickedness from which you have taken war?"

"Nay—but a world of Righteousness," said Emanuel, doggedly. "Is it not written in the Books of the Prophets?"

"I speak as a woman; and a woman cannot love a man except for some quality not possessed by herself, that she finds or imagines in him. She must at least think him brave—a man who can dare. When courage goes out of man Love will depart from her. Men and women love opposites, not the same thing."

"Nay," said the Master, "but in the Prophets it is written that War shall cease and Knowledge shall reign." He sat down and resumed his work without attempting to persuade. He had spoken and had failed to move her. Enough. But when he rose from his work an hour later, his eyes were troubled. The woman's prophetic Vision had left its mark.

CHAPTER XXIX

"In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come, kiss me, Sweet-and-Twenty."

Francesca could have said more. She was conscious that she had stated her case badly; what she meant was to ask whether, should the world be suddenly presented with the Kingdom of Heaven subject to certain conditions of righteousness, the world would be found at once ready to comply with these conditions, even to obtain so great a gift. Seeing that the offer is daily and hourly renewed to a heedless world, she thought that perhaps, even under these new conditions, it would not be accepted. Nay, the opening of every new way of approach to that blissful reign—such as freedom of speech and action, material ease and comfort, education, invention, and discovery—has only hitherto been used to block up the other end of that way of approach, and to divert the new road into a broad and handsome thoroughfare for the opposite or hostile Kingdom. She said no more then but retreated, hoping for another conversation, and for what the preachers used to call enlargement of speech. Alas! That enlargement! For want of it we express our thoughts so feebly and understand each other so little!

She went back to the parlor. Here Nelly, who had finished washing up the breakfast cups, was collecting her music and tying it up. She had left off crying, but her eyes were too bright. There was a red spot on her cheek; she was too quick in her movements. She looked up and laughed—at nothing—not merrily, when Francesca appeared.

"You have had another sermon, then?" she said, and laughed again, nervously.

"Can I help you in anything, Nelly? Are you sorting your music?"

"Yes, I am sorting all the music. Well, Francesca, I have shown you all I could—the synagogue and the people, everything

except the slums—and you don't want to see them. You will tell Clara that I did what I could for you—"

"Of course. But why, Nelly? You can tell Clara yourself."

"I don't know about that." Nelly shook her head. Then she laughed again—a little hysterical laugh, which ended in something very like a sob.

"Why, Nelly, what is the matter? You have not—"

"Nothing is the matter except a little headache. That is all. Only a little headache. Francesca, I have not been able to show you a Jewish wedding. Now that is something you would really like to see. To begin with, there is a beautiful velvet canopy, supported by four men, who are witnesses. There must be at least ten men present as witnesses. The parents of both bring the bride and bridegroom and place them under the canopy. The Chief Rabbi of the synagogue should be there, if possible, and the Chassan, or Reader. First they take a glass of wine and pray; then the bride and bridegroom drink of the wine one after the other; then the bridegroom puts the ring on the bride's finger and says, 'Beloved, thou art wedded to me with this ring, according to the law of Moses and Israel.' After that they read the marriage contract, and they drink more wine with benedictions. Then they break the glass, and the company all cry out together, wishing good-luck to the newly-married pair. And then they have a feast, as great a feast as they can afford—a feast that lasts for seven days sometimes. I should like you to be present at my wedding, Francesca, but that can't be, now."

Francesca looked up sharply. What did Nelly mean?

"The way these Christians get married," she went on, "is just dreadful. They needn't even have a prayer. There needn't be any witnesses. They needn't go to a church; and all they've got to do is to put their names down in a book, that's all," she shuddered. "It's a dreadful way to get married. All the same, it is a real marriage. The man can't get out of it afterwards, even if he wants to ever so much."

"Nelly, what do you mean? What have you done about Mr. Hayling?"

"That's all right. You'll very soon find out that it's all right, Francesca." Nelly, with an armful of music, stopped in her work and sat down in a chair. "I should have liked to talk it over with you, but I couldn't; you don't understand. You are

not like other girls, you know. One would think you didn't want a lover—well"— for Francesca changed color—"of course you do, because, after all, with your fine manners and your stand-offishness—which I like in you—there's a woman under it all; but you don't talk about it as we do—me and my friends; we don't talk about anything else except our things. So I had to settle it my own way, without taking your advice. I couldn't even advise with Clara, because she was dead against it all the time; so I had to settle it for myself. The long and the short of it all is that I can't give him up, Francesca. Don't tell me that he is this and that, I know what he is just as well as you do, and I can't give him up—even for the sake of my father and my People and my religion."

"Oh, but, Nelly, think—consider; you will at any rate do nothing rash?"

"Oh no"— she laughed again; "nothing rash; I can promise that."

She carried her music and her two banjoes out of the room.

Had Francesca been like any of those other girls—Nelly's friends—she would have guessed by this sign what was going to be done. But she was not like other girls. Love and courtship and marriage—least of all clandestine marriage—of these things she neither spoke nor thought. Nelly, however, had been spending a terrible time of struggle. She had to choose—many girls have had the same choice—between her lover and her People. Now, she was a Jewess—one to whom the choice means much more than to others. When a man left that ancient Faith, and afterwards changed his mind and returned to it, they made him in former times lie across the door, so that the faithful could step upon him and wipe their shoes upon him. In this way they testified to their horror of apostasy. What happened with a woman? In the good old times she would be led out of the camp and stoned to death. And now? She would henceforward be to her People as one who is dead—and she would have to become a Christian. Now it is difficult, as we are constantly being told, for an Irish Catholic to become a Protestant; for a Scotch Presbyterian to become an Episcopalian; for a Pole to exchange the Church of Rome for the Church of the Czar; difficult, everywhere, to leave the patriotic creed for the persecuting creed. But for a Jew to become a Christian is a thing ten times—a hundred

times—more difficult. And Nelly must become a Christian if she ceased to be a Jewess.

Francesca, restless and oppressed with the possession of her great secret, and not able to think just then about Nelly's love affairs, put on her hat and went out to walk up and down the great highway. She stayed out for two hours. When she returned, about noon, she found Alma, the little handmaid, sitting on the stairs, and crying into her apron.

"Why, Alma," she said, "what is the matter?"

"She's gone, miss. She sent her best love to you, and she's gone."

"Who has gone?"

"Miss Nelly, miss. She took all her things and her banjoes and her music and everything, and she's gone away in a four-wheel cab. She told me to tell you, with her best love, that she was gone away to be married, and that she wasn't ever coming back again. Oh! oh! oh!" The child broke out into fresh crying.

"Gone away to be married?"

"Yes—miss—with her best love, and she's never coming back any more."

"Did she say anything else?"

"She poured out a glass of sherry wine and she said would I drink some when she got into the cab and wish me joy and good-luck and break the wineglass for luck—and I did! There's the bits; and would I throw a handful of rice after the cab for luck—and I did—for luck—and she said she'd left some letters in the parlor."

There were, in fact, three letters. One was for herself, Francesa, one was for Clara, and the other was for her father.

The first was as follows:

"Dear Francesca,—After what you have seen and heard, and after what I told you this morning, which was plain enough for any girl in the world except you to understand, you ought not to be surprised to hear that I've gone off with the man I love. I've tried to get over it, but it's no use. I can never be happy without him. So I am to meet him to-day at noon, and we are to be married at the Registrar's. It has all been arranged. He put up my name in proper order, only when it came to the last I was

afraid to go, and it angered him. You saw how it angered him. He swore he would kill himself. Dear Francesca, how could I think of living if I were to cause his suicide?

"Dear Francesca, you were hard upon him the other day. All men want a girl to keep company with. Since I wouldn't have him, can I blame him for turning to you? Besides, he wasn't quite in his right mind. You'll forgive me for being jealous. And I am sure, now, that you didn't tempt him with looks. You couldn't do such a thing.

"Dear Francesca, you don't understand. You are too grand for us. You despise my boy because he isn't so proud and cold as you like. We don't expect our husbands to be angels. We take them as they are made for us, and we make the best of each other. If Anthony keeps steady, and won't drink, I have no fear for him. When a man takes to drink it's all over. But he won't, because the sight of his mother makes him sick. I shall keep him off the music-hall boards, because I've heard from the pupils what goes on in some of the places, and he sha'n't have the temptations of it. As for his talk about Parliament, that's only a dream. Let him dream, if it makes him happy. I mean to keep him at his place—steady—at the works.

"Dear Francesca, it was good of you to feel happy with me. You are a great deal too grand and wise for me to be quite at ease with you. But I've done my best, and now you don't want me any more. My father will be very angry. I do not know what he will say, but it will be too late for him to do anything. Come and see me soon. I am not afraid of you. As for my father, he will say dreadful things, but there's a saying, 'A thousand bad words never tore a shirt.' You will find the bunch of house-keys in the right-hand drawer in my bedroom. I'm afraid they are not much use to you, but there's nobody else to take them.

"Your loving

"NELL (by the time you get this, Nelly Hayling)."

She took the letter and the news to Emanuel.

"In the East," said Emanuel, "they lock up the girls in the Harem; they are never allowed to run about without an escort. That one of these girls should fall in love with a stranger is therefore impossible and unknown. It is partly by keeping up the

Oriental custom of secluding the girls that we have kept the race apart. When such a girl as Nelly is left to receive young men as pupils, the next step is to receive one of them as a lover. Her father ought not to be surprised."

"What can we do?"

"Nothing. We do not know where her father is. I will go to Mortimer Street, if you like, and see Mr. Angelo. You can telegraph to her cousin, Clara. But the girl is married by this time. Nothing can alter that."

"I am afraid her father will be very angry. He is a passionate and a wilful man. Nelly was always afraid of him."

"He may be angry at first. He will probably use the language of great wrath. When he understands that he cannot alter things, he will accept them. Perhaps he will never forgive his daughter. Francesca, you must take pity upon this girl. She has been left too much alone. Before I came here she was sometimes left alone for months. She is taken away from all her friends by a young man who has no friends of his own to give her. The boy's father does not belong to our People, and his mother is a drunkard. Do not desert her. Go and see her in a few days. Be kind to her. Let her feel that she has one friend, at least, left. In time of trouble—with such a boy as that there is sure to be trouble—a woman, if she have no friends of her own sex, may fall into madness, and do things which can never afterwards be undone."

Emanuel went away on his errand. He returned in the afternoon. Mr. Angelo knew nothing about his brother's travels. He showed himself greatly moved by the news, and foretold unforgiving wrath on his brother's part. The girl, he said, had ceased to belong to the family. Henceforth her name should not be mentioned in his house. In the whole long history of his family no such apostasy had ever been known; and so on—what might have been expected.

Clara obeyed the telegram and hurried to the house, but there was nothing to do but to wait. How long would they have to wait before they would find out the father's address? Neither Emanuel nor Clara nor Francesca knew anything about the turf, or they would have understood that so well-known a man as Mr. Sydney Bernard would be certain on such and such a day to be at such and such a place. There could be no doubt of it. This, however, they did not understand.

"It may be weeks," said Clara, "before he comes home again. Oh, we must find him somehow! My father must help to find him. He does not write to Nelly for weeks together sometimes. It's a shame! The poor girl was left alone in the house, with no one but her pupils and this little girl. No wonder she got to thinking foolishness! And such a conceited stick of half a man, too! How a girl can throw herself away upon such an object! —no money and no brains. Poor Nell!"

Presently they took a tearful tea, and fell to talking of things sorrowful—the temptations which surround and beset every pretty girl, that admirable arrangement of the Oriental veil for the baffling of the tempter, and so forth.

When it grew dark they lit candles and became more gloomy. Then Emanuel joined them; but he was silent, and at sight of him Francesca was reminded of the Great Discovery. Strange! She was one of the Conspiracy about to revolutionize the world —nothing short of that stupendous fact!—and she had forgotten it in the absorbing interest of this case of a vulgar Romeo and a lower, middle-class Juliet! The incongruity made her smile. Afterwards she made some admirable reflections on the vast importance of the individual soul; but she did not put these reflections into words.

Emanuel sat with them, his legs crossed upright in his chair. The two girls whispered.

Suddenly they heard outside, distinct above the patter of the strolling feet, the quick, sharp beat of a man's foot. It stopped at the door. The door was opened with a key; the man stepped into the narrow hall.

"Good Heavens!" whispered Clara; "it is my uncle's step. He's the only man who has a latch-key. Who has told him? Why has he come here? Francesca—Emanuel—help me; stand by me; he will blame me—oh!"

For the door opened, and Mr. Sydney Bernard himself strode in. He greeted no one; he scowled on the assembled company; his face was dark—it was distorted, apparently with wrath. Heaven help his daughter! Some one must have told him.

"Where is Nelly?" he asked, roughly.

CHAPTER XXX

'Tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change.—*Hamlet.*

THEY all three stood up as in the presence of Misfortune.

"Uncle!" cried Clara. "Who has told you? Have you heard?"

"Don't ask silly questions. I've heard enough to make ten men sick."

"Have you had a letter, then?"

"Letters? What is the girl talking about? There will be letters enough to-morrow, and next day, and the day after that! Letters? Aye, and telegrams, telephones, messages; people who will sit down on the office door-step. They'd come here if they knew. Oh, there will be plenty! Where the devil is Nell?"

"You say you have heard, and yet—you ask—where she is?"

"Clara," Francesca whispered, "he is thinking of something else. Some dreadful misfortune has happened. Look at his face!"

"Sydney Bernard"—Emanuel laid his hand upon his shoulder—"you have come home in great trouble. I know not the extent of your trouble—"

"Extent? Why, all the world will guess it to-night, and will know it to-morrow. It is Ruin—Ruin—Ruin!"

"Ruin? Yet there are Ruins which may be repaired. If it is only money—"

"Only money?—only money? Fool! What is there besides money?"

Emanuel stepped back. "What is there," he repeated, sadly, "besides money? Man—there is the whole world besides money. Is money all you desire or all you dread? At this moment—this very moment—you will be rebuked. Can a man be struck in no other way?"

"None that he will feel so much," said Mr. Bernard.

"Tell him, Clara," said Emanuel.

"Here is a letter for you, uncle." Clara gave him the letter.

He snatched it from her, glaring round like a hunted man.

"Ruin!" he repeated; "and this blamed Fool asks if it is only money! I am lost! What do you understand about Ruin and Loss and Dishonor, you—Dreamer? You know, Clara, what it means. Go home and tell your father that it is all over. I've been broke a dozen times, but never like this before. I have got over many blows, but this is death. Tell your father that it's thousands upon thousands; far too big a thing for me to go to him about; and as for money to meet them all—it's this way." He pulled his pockets inside out; they were empty. "That's all. Ruin! Ruin! Ruin! Where's Nell? I want her to pack up all I've got. I must cross the water this very evening. Boulogne for me, for the present."

"Read the letter," said Emanuel.

He took the letter and looked at it, but without reading a word. His mind was elsewhere; he was full of his own trouble. "What are you doing—you three—staring at me? It hasn't got into the papers yet, I suppose? Well? What d'ye mean—all of you? I haven't murdered any one. There've been other defaulters before me; yet that doesn't make it any better for me. You—what's your name?—with your talk about money; if you're one of Us you love the gambling of it, and the sport of it; else, how can you be one of Us? Well, there's to be no more sport for me. I can never show my face—never be seen in Fleet Street—never again. And as for a race-course, why, I've seen 'em warned off; I've seen 'em run for it. I've seen 'em guyed while they ran. And now to remember those unlucky sportsmen, and to think of myself!"

"Read the letter," Emanuel repeated.

"Where's Nelly? Where's my girl?" he asked, looking round helplessly.

"Read the letter." Emanuel took it from his hands and held it before his face. "Read, I say. You will know then where Nelly is."

At last he read it—first, his mind still full of his other trouble—without comprehending one word of it. He read it again; this time with bewilderment. He read it a third time, and handed the letter, without a word, to Clara.

"It is true, uncle. She left the house at twelve o'clock to-day, telling the girl she was going to be married. She took her box

with her, and her instruments and music, except the piano, and she said she was not coming back any more. She's married to a young man named—"

"Read it for me," he said. "I don't seem able to understand to-night, somehow. It's—it's—the other business, I suppose."

Clara read it.

"DEAR FATHER,—When you get this letter I shall be married. I am going to marry a Christian. I am sure you would never consent, so I have told you nothing about it. When you are able to understand that all my happiness is concerned with this marriage I hope you will forgive me; meantime I am afraid you will be angry. I am to remain in any religion that I like. Since it is my happiness, I hope you will be able to forgive me.

"Your affectionate daughter, NELLY."

"Is it true?" he asked, helplessly. "Is it true? Nelly—my Nelly—married to a Christian? What does it mean, at all? Why did she do it? Is it true?"

"It is quite true, uncle. She is married to a man named—"

"Silence! I will hear no more. She is married to a Christian!" He laid his hand upon his forehead. "I was thinking of the other thing. I am ruined. My money is gone, and my name. I am lost. I came home, thinking to tell my child that her father was a pauper — perhaps she had a pound or two to spare. I thought that she would cry a little and comfort me a little. It's something for a man to creep home and hear words that mean nothing—hopes when there is not any hope—praise when the whole sky is ringing with curses! And I come home, and she is dead—dead! My daughter is dead—my child—my Preciada—my Nelly—she is dead!"

The ruined book-maker looked about him with the dignity of this double misfortune. No one said anything, no one moved; he was bereft of money, name, and child—all gone together.

"She is dead," he repeated, "but there is no body; there is no shroud wanted. The watcher of Death is not in the house; there will be no funeral. We shall not sit in a circle and eat the funeral eggs." He drew a knife from his pocket, opened the blade, and pulling his coat round with his left hand, cut through the right side of his coat a hand-breadth with the knife. "Lo!" he said,

"my daughter is dead, and for her sake I rend my garments. My daughter—my Preciada—my Nelly—my pretty girl—is dead and buried. Let the lighted candle and the basin of water be placed in her room for the purification of her soul. She is buried—but not among her People! She is dead—among the Gentiles. We have broken our fast together after the funeral; we have said Kodesh to deliver her soul—but no, her soul is lost. Let us mourn for the dead after the manner of our religion."

In the old days the mourners sat on the ground without shoes; in that position they received the condolences of their friends. So sat Job after his misfortunes. Mr. Bernard did not take off his boots, nor did he sit upon the floor. For an elderly man to sit on the floor without his boots may be Oriental, but it is no longer dignified. Mr. Bernard sat in a chair in the middle of the room; he sat in silence, with folded hands and bowed head.

They left him there; they went out into the garden and sat awhile. Then the girls went to bed, leaving Emanuel alone.

In the morning they found the mourner still sitting in the same place. Had he passed the night there? They left him there undisturbed, and took their breakfasts in the kitchen. And all the blinds of every window were pulled down, so that the neighbors might know that Death was among them. All day long he stayed there. They sent food to him. Next morning he was still there, sitting silent in his chair.

"He has lost," said Emanuel, "more than his daughter. He is in mourning for what, as he said blasphemously, he should feel more than anything else. He is thinking how he can get back again to his old life. It does him good to be alone and to think."

For four days the bereaved father sat in the place of mourning. But no friends came. None of them, in fact, knew the private residence of Mr. Sydney Bernard—which, for many reasons, he did not disclose to his friends of the turf. Had they known, the private residence would have been besieged, and the week of mourning would have met with scant respect. For behold! It was a time in which the friends of this book-maker inquired after him in vain. He was broken; that was pretty certain. It was rumored that he could not, by many thousands, meet his engagements. Loud were the curses of those who had lost their money, or had lost their winnings. Many gallant craft, manned by bold

book-makers, went down in that fearful season, when nothing came off for the unhappy book-makers, and every race was a race for the backer, and the favorites romped in gayly. The shore was strewn with wreck and broken timbers. And the book-makers—what became of them? Go ask of the evening breeze—the cold breeze of December—when it blows chill and eager across the lonely Heath of Newmarket. You may hear the voice of their shades—their pale ghosts—in that evening breeze, lamenting the fatal run which laid them low. It was well for Mr. Sydney Bernard that he was nowhere seen abroad at this bad time. He vanished. No one knew that he was mourning the death of a beloved daughter. Men whispered that he was in retreat—that he had been seen by victims at Boulogne, at Brussels, at Ostend.

For four long days he sat in dignity and silence in that front parlor, no longer the pupil-room. Clara remained to lend any assistance that might be wanted. They all, except the mourner, continued to take their meals in the kitchen. It was a time of silence, except for whispers and for the sobs of Alma. The meals were in noway festive. Otherwise, it was mourning without grief.

"I cannot go to see her," said Clara, "without my father's leave. After a bit he will give it, and then I will go. But you can go, Francesca. Poor Nell! And after all, to marry such a Jackanapes! If I did marry a Christian, it should be a decent sort. But that fellow! Oh!"

And during these days there was no talk at all of the Great Invention.

For four days the mourner occupied that chair in solemn silence. He sat in it all day long. Perhaps he sat in it all night long as well, for they found him there in the morning, and left him there in the evening.

"Why does he make all this pretence?" asked Francesca. "Surely it is enough to say, once for all, that she is dead."

"The Law," said Emanuel, "commands that a daughter of Israel shall marry in her father's tribe; it is the Law. If the Law is broken the guilty woman is outside the law. In ancient days she would be stoned. Of many Jewesses it is related that they have been seduced from their religion by Christian lovers; terrible things have been told of the wrath and revenge of their own People; how one was captured and taken home to have her nose cut

off, and so sent back disfigured to her lover; and another, the mistress of a Crusader, to whom a Jew was a name of horror, was denounced by her own brother as a Jewess to her lover, who handed her over to be burned alive."

"Emanuel, for Heaven's sake, spare me!"

"The Chronicles of your People are not all of meekness and submission, child. When a Jewess leaves the Faith she is dead by the Law. This man follows the ancient custom, though the Law is no longer maintained in its pristine rigor."

"Well," said Francesca, "I think it would be more dignified for Nelly's father to give over this foolish pretence of mourning, and more simply to say, if he means it, that he would speak to his daughter no more."

On the fourth day, however, the mourning was brought to a sudden stop, and that in a very surprising and unexpected manner.

It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Francesca, with the aid of the little maid (who moved about on tiptoe, spoke in whispers as if in the presence of death, and from time to time sat down to cry in the corner of her apron), had just completed a fruit pie for dinner—a pie containing red currants and raspberries, which is an excellent dish, especially when it is served as the Christians have it, with cream or milk. As the Chosen People take their fruit pies without milk, it is not so good. The task despatched, she mounted the kitchen stairs and looked out of the garden door. Through the hanging branches of the Virginia-creeper she saw Emanuel sitting as usual at his bench at work, bareheaded, in the hot July sun. Since the disaster of Nelly's elopement she had said nothing of the Discovery. From the parlor there came voices; some one was with the Mourner. It was a loud and cheery voice. Now when Eliphaz the Temanite, and the other comforters visited Job the Mourner they spoke in hushed voice, and with bated breath. Then the parlor door was thrown open, and Mr. Sydney Bernard came forth briskly.

"Alma!" he shouted down the kitchen stairs, "pull up your blinds below, open the window. Come up-stairs and pull up all the blinds, and open all the windows."

"What do you mean, Mr. Bernard?" cried Francesca, turning round in astonishment. "Are the days of mourning over? Have you forgiven Nelly? Is she restored to life?"

"We have mourned enough. As for forgiving, we will see presently. I am going away with my brother. I don't know when I shall come back." He replied in short, abrupt sentences, and hurried back to the parlor, shutting the door carefully behind him. Something had happened to change his religious gloom into a mood resembling the opposite.

What happened, in fact, was as follows. His brother, the dealer of Mortimer Street, came to see him.

"Nelly is dead," said Mr. Bernard, looking up. "My daughter Preciada is dead."

"Aye, aye. This is as it should be. Yes; I know all about it. Brother, haven't you mourned long enough? Come, we are not Rabbis. Perhaps when you have heard what I have found out, you will get up and go out and give over mourning, and look cheerful again."

"I can never look cheerful again. Did not Clara tell you. It is not only that Nelly is dead—I am ruined. I may just as well stay here, where none of them will find me. I've been thinking all the time what to do. I can think here, but I see no way out of it. My name is gone. I am ruined, brother."

"I know all about that, too. Now, Sydney, you know I don't talk wild about money, so listen. If I show you how to win back your name and your credit again as good as ever, and better—much better—without any loss to you of name or reputation, wouldn't you give over this sackcloth and ashes? Not but what you've done the right thing, brother."

Sydney Bernard sat upright in his chair. Then, being rather stiff, after sitting with bowed head and round shoulders upon a little cane-bottom chair for four days and four nights, or thereabouts, he rose slowly, and stretched himself, rubbing his legs as one grooms a horse.

"No, brother," he said; "you are certainly not one of those who talk wild about money; you know better. What is it you mean?"

Mr. Angelo pulled up the blind of the darkened room and threw open the window. Then he sat down in the chair of the mourner, and began to unfold his tale.

"Nelly is married," he said, "to a certain Anthony Hayling."

"I don't want to hear his name," interrupted the injured father. "Don't mention him to me or the girl either."

"Let me tell the story my own way. When it is told you shall have your look in. It's worth telling, as you will acknowledge. Anthony Hayling, five days ago, when he married Nelly, was clerk in some Chemical Works. He is now dismissed for incompetence. He has, therefore, no employment for the present, and no means. That's a good beginning for the married pair, isn't it? The young man is the only son of one Anthony Hayling, Editor and Proprietor of an insignificant paper, called the *Friend of Labor*. His mother is a drunken drab, neither more nor less, whom his father married at Poplar when he was playing at being a sailor before the mast. But his father—listen now—is a superior kind of man, as I said; he has been a common sailor; for many years he was a sailor—first a common sailor before the mast, then a mate on a sailing-ship. I believe she was in the currant and Levant line, and she was owned by one of Us, from whom I learned these particulars. Now it isn't usual, is it, for a common sailor to become Editor of a paper. I've got some copies of the paper. It is full of ideas, and practical ideas, too." Mr. Angelo laughed softly. "To think of the pains and trouble taken just in trying to persuade the working-man of the simplest things, and all to no purpose. For he is a Fool, and he remains a Fool. And we, who carry the bag, reap the fruits of his Foolishness. However, there we are. Common sailor, mate in a sailing-ship in the Levant trade, editor of a Labor paper, man with large ideas, philanthropist if you like, man with the manners and the language and the bearing of a gentleman—that is the father of your son-in-law. As for the boy himself, he is a weak, poor creature, vain and shallow. He will give trouble."

"Go on. I am listening."

"I first saw the paper in Emanuel's hands. He wrapped up some of his work in it. I looked at it, and asked him how he came by it. He told me that the Editor was an old friend of his —Emanuel knows half the world—and that he had been once a sailor. Also that he was not a common sailor, but one who could think and speak. 'So,' says I, 'what is the name of this uncommon sailor?' 'Anthony Hayling,' says Emanuel. I thought very little more about it till I heard the news of Nelly's marriage. Who was she married to? Anthony Hayling; Anthony Hayling. Rather odd Christian name for father and son both to have, isn't it? And then—you know in my line of business it is always use-

ful to know something of the peerage—I remembered that there was an Earl of Hayling who went away from his estates twenty years ago, came back once about fifteen years ago, and is reported to have been seen somewhere Limehouse way; but this is uncertain. His Christian name was Anthony; his father's and his grandfather's name was Anthony. Now, do you begin to suspect what is coming?"

"Do you mean to tell me that this boy is the son of—"

"Wait. The things put together worked upon me so that I had no rest till I went down myself to the office of the paper. Fortunately, the editor was in the shop. I bought a copy, and I had a little talk with him. Brother, you know a gentleman when you see him? To be sure you do. You've learned it in your way of business. So have I. We both have to do with gentlemen. The thing can't be made by spending a few thousands, can it? A man gets rich, but he don't become a gentleman that way, does he? Some of our People think he can, but you and I know better. It's a mistake. You can't make a gentleman all at once, spend as much money as you like upon him."

"I know a gentleman," said the book-maker, "as soon as I see him. Sometimes he's a Juggins. Sometimes he's a Leg; yet a gentleman. Go on."

"The Editor of the paper is a gentleman. Very good. So I went straight to the Earl's solicitors, whom I found without much trouble, and I asked if they knew anybody who could identify the Earl. There were three men at least within reach, besides any number of his old tenants and people. One was his old valet, who has now got a public-house close to Jermyn Street; one was an old clerk in the office; one was a partner. I took the clerk with me. I drove in a cab to the office; I planted him on the curb outside the office, and told him to look in and watch, and say nothing. I went in, and presently brought out my man to the door in conversation. 'Did you see him?' I asked the clerk when we walked away. 'I did,' says he. 'Who is he?' I asked. 'He's the Earl of Hayling,' says the clerk. 'Will you swear it,' I asked. 'Anywheres,' he says. So I drove him home again. Now, brother, the next thing was to find out that the Earl was married, and where. Five-and-twenty years ago he was a common merchantman's sailor. Where would he be married? There are only half a dozen places—Poplar, Shadwell, Wapping, Limehouse, Stepney

—not many more. I tried Poplar first, and there I found the marriage. He was married in the church. 'Anthony Hayling, sailor, to Phœbe Dickson, spinster.' And a year later the baptism of Anthony, son of Anthony and Phœbe Hayling. There is no doubt whatever. Your son-in-law, brother, is none other than the Viscount Selsey, son and heir of the Right Honorable the Earl of Hayling, and your daughter is the Viscountess Selsey—Lady Selsey."

"Is this true? Are you quite—quite sure? Is it really true?"

"It is quite true. Moreover, the estate is worth—I don't know, landed property isn't what it was—thirty thousand a year, perhaps, nominal rent-roll. And for a good many years this has been piling up. There may be a quarter of a million or more by this time. There's a Mr. Harold Alleyne—fellow who wants to marry Francesca here. His father was a brother of the Earl, and was allowed to enjoy the estates until he died. Accumulations? I should think so! Very good. Now I didn't stop there. I went round to see the boy. Pretty low I found him, with his wife crying. So I wasted no time. I told him that you were infuriated. I made him understand that you could, if you chose, follow him wherever he went. And then I hinted at what might be done. Finally, I made him agree to a certain proposal. If, by my means or your means, he should find himself placed in a position of competence or ease, he would pay all your liabilities—his father-in-law's liabilities—due at the present day in gratitude. He's of age, and he signed, and I witnessed and brought the paper away. We may, perhaps, get it put so as to look better, but it's safe—that's the main thing. And now, brother, you are prepared to forgive that dear girl when she's acknowledged to be Lady Selsey, and becomes an ornament of the British Aristocracy. Brother, he's a Christian! and he's a Fool. But it's a real lift for the family, isn't it?"

"Why, yes," Mr. Bernard replied, slowly. "It certainly seems to make a difference. Do you think that money will come along in time? One mustn't keep 'em waiting much longer."

"When a girl runs off with a pauper," said his brother, "that's one thing; when she runs off with a noble lord, that's another. Now, look here; I'm so certain that it's all right, that I'm going to take you right away to your own office in Bouverie Street. You will come up smiling. You will invite all the people you

know to come up. I've got my check-book, and I'll draw the checks for you as fast as you like. You can send word by messenger—by post—telegraph—that the money is all right. And I've got an advertisement for you. See!" he pulled out his pocket-book and produced a paper. "'Mr. Sydney Bernard begs to inform his friends that a sudden illness has incapacitated him from attending to business during the last four or five days. He has now returned, and can be found at the usual place.' How's that?"

"Brother," said Mr. Bernard, "you're not only the lucky one of the family, but you deserve your luck."

"Lucky one? Why, what do you call yourself? Father of the Viscountess Selsey, who is daughter-in-law of the Right Honorable the Earl of Hayling? Me—the lucky one? Why, I can leave Clara a hundred thousand when I go, and yet I don't believe I could get so much as a Baronet for her. Now come with me. Carry it off with a good bold air. You ruined? You a defaulter? Stuff and rubbish. Have up the champagne. Pour it out like water. All a mistake—all that infernal knock over—congestion of the liver. Hit hard? Not a bit of it. Didn't do well—naturally, nobody did. But a blow like that is easy met. Come, brother."

"I think," said Mr. Sydney Bernard, getting his hat, "that it would be sinful not to forgive the poor girl under the circumstances. I've done what is right. I mourned for her."

"And I will say this, brother. You have shown a very proper and becoming spirit. It looked at first as if it was a monstrous Family Disgrace. As such you treated it. We are now, however, allied to the English Aristocracy. We shall all mount, brother. We shall mount higher by this fortunate alliance. But the boy is an arrant Fool. And oh," he grasped his brother's hand, "think of the old place and the old days in Middlesex Street! Only think! Money and the Cromwell Road for me; the House of Lords for you or your daughter, which is the same thing. Wonderful! And the father and the old grandfather still in the little shop with the bundles of sticks! Wonderful, I call it!"

CHAPTER XXXI

> The sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds:
> Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.
>
> *Shakespeare.*

THE Revolutionary Company of Four were holding a Council at the office of the *Friend of Labor*—that little back office which looked out upon a formerly whitewashed wall at the bottom of a well, into which the sun never penetrated. It was, I believe, in reality, though this is not generally known, the well in which Truth herself once resided; for that reason the *Friend of Labor*, though fitly edited here, is not popular. Conspiracies, however, are very properly concocted in corners and hatched in dark places.

"Oh," cried Francesca, feeling herself in this dark room at the bottom of a well, "here we are all hidden away in a corner with this terrible Invention of ours! And we ought to be receiving delegates from the whole world in St. Paul's Cathedral, and telling them that there will be no more War!"

"Yet you have had Visions, child," said Emanuel, jealously.

"Oh, my Visions! What are my Visions compared with your wisdom, my Master? If you are quite sure that the world will at once rise to the full meaning of the thing—"

"It is not my Wisdom—it is the voice of Prophecy. How it will be accomplished I know not. The world is full of evil—that we know very well. In the Reign of Peace iniquity will exist no longer. That also we know."

"Emanuel," said Mr. Hayling, speaking slowly, as was his wont, "you carried me off my head the other night, so that I could say nothing. I was knocked off my legs—I heeled over like a ship in a gale. I came home in a dream, my brain whirling. I felt as if the old neglected prophecies were all coming true together. Everybody was coming back—Arthur, Charlemagne, Frederick Redbeard—your Hebrew Prophecies that we regard so little were coming true—the Reign of Justice was to begin without any more

delay. It was wonderful, truly wonderful! I looked at my sleeping wife, and told myself that she would drink no more; we should all be converted, we should all become Righteous. I have never been so much moved in all my life—not even when I resolved to give up everything and share the Common Lot."

"The Word is great, and great were the hearts of those who heard it," said Emanuel, softly. "Only a noble heart can understand a noble Prophecy."

"In the morning came reflection, and reflection brought doubt. And, if you please, Emanuel, we will consider the position a little."

"Let us consider it from every point of view."

"Your Invention, when it is divulged to the world, will enable a single person—a child—to destroy a whole army, or a city, or a fleet—at a distance—unseen—unsuspected."

"It is nothing less than that. Add that the composition is simple. Any one can make it."

"Very well. The first effect, unless the general Righteousness begins simultaneously with the possession of this new power, will certainly be the destruction of London, Paris, New York—every great city in the world."

"The Reign of Righteousness," said Emanuel, firmly, "will begin at once."

"Well, but if not, the mere possession of such a power will be too great for many minds. They will not be able to resist the temptation to use that power. London, I suppose, will be destroyed from all quarters at once. Every new method of destruction produces at first a company of destroyers. In the sixteenth century they poisoned each other—there were poisoners by the hundred; seventy years ago, when the lucifer match was discovered, they set fire to hay-ricks with it; now they blow up houses with dynamite. Presently they get tired of destruction; the thing ceases to present temptation. But when your invention becomes known we shall certainly begin with that power of universal havoc and a period of maddening terror."

"No, no. It is impossible. There will ensue immediately the Reign of Righteousness."

Anthony shook his head. "Suppose, however," he went on, "that the method was kept a secret. What would happen? Suppose that we kept the secret in our own country. Suppose that it

was guarded—say, kept in the possession of two men only, handing the secret down from one to another. We should then begin with one war, and only one—say, with France—just to show that there never could be another with a nation which possessed this stupendous secret. We should begin by destroying Cherbourg, with all the ships and the dockyard and the forts and every soldier, sailor, man, woman, and child in the place. This accomplished, once, and only once—just to show what we could do—that war, and all other wars, so far as we were concerned, would be ended. Suppose that this went on for four hundred years, during which no other nation acquired our secret. What would happen? Exactly what happened to the people of Constantinople—enormous wealth, security almost absolute, greed and lust of power; tyranny, villainies of every kind, cowardice, cruelty. You can no more trust a nation than you can trust an individual with irresponsible power."

"That is quite true. But I am not proposing to give this secret to any nation. It must be given to the whole world. Then War itself will cease, suddenly and forever. The world will address itself—it must—to the advancement of humanity."

"You will give it to the world. Well, then let us see what would happen. At first, as I said, there would be wanton and wholesale death and destruction. That would presently die out. What next? You say, no more War. I think that War would be made a hundred times more exciting, and therefore a hundred times more attractive. You would have no army. There would be scattered about companies of scouts; they would kill each other at sight; they would prevent each other from approaching within distance of a town. But there would be no more towns, and no longer any great congregations of men. Fleets would be useless; armies usless; forts useless; towns would invite destruction. The scouts would crawl about separately destroying houses; every man would be a soldier. We should go back a thousand years, and go to war on every—even the smallest—provocation. Men would fight duels which might last for years, chasing each other. Emanuel, I do not think your invention would prevent War."

"It must. You could never expect men to live under the apprehension of being destroyed at any moment."

"Why not? In the old times the enemy suddenly came out

of the forest and fell upon the people and killed them all. They lived in apprehension, but they lived. We all live in apprehension. Fire, pestilence, accident, sudden death may always fall upon us. You will add a new terror to life, my friend, and a very terrible terror; but you will not abolish War. What do you think, Mr. —Alleyne? It is odd that I did not catch your name the other night. There is an Alleyne family, I think, which has a title in it."

"My uncle is—or was—the Earl of Hayling. He is lost."

"Lost!" repeated the Editor. "Strange! Lost! Doubtless he is dead. Well, sir, may I ask what you think?"

"I think," Harold replied," that the terror caused by war under these new conditions would be too great for war to be continued. The breaking-up of great towns would be necessary, I suppose, as you point out. But that might help Emanuel's beginning of a new Rule. With new communities would be destroyed some of the present evils."

"The world is growing ripe for the abolition of war," Emanuel went on. "The soldiers have found a voice. Twenty years ago the Germans said loudly that they would fight no more for King or Kaiser. The rank-and-file know better now what is meant by War. They see illustrated papers. Many have seen a battle-field. I myself saw the assault on Plevna, and the place the day after. I have seen the dead bodies, lying where they were slain, of Hicks Pasha's army. No one who has ever seen such a sight would desire to see another unless he were a Napoleon. Well, this is under present conditions—when only a tenth, or an eighth, or a sixth, fall on the field, the rest escape. Under the new system, they would know that not one would escape. Who would go out to War under such conditions?"

Mr. Hayling shook his head. "The wit of man can alter tactics to suit all conditions. But since War would become more scientific, it would more and more attract the men of intellect. It would be no more a war of armies; it would be a war in which brain was set against brain, cunning against cunning, with a certainty that blunder meant death. Why, war would become the most delightful pursuit possible. There would be no need to hamper the generals with private soldiers; the army would consist wholly of scientific men who would stake their lives upon the superiority of their science over that of the other men. Think of the prepara-

tion, the colleges, the continual new discoveries, until somebody at last—you yourself, Emanuel, in another body—would discover a way to produce invisibility! That done, I don't know. We will wait to consider the effect of invisibility."

"These," said Emanuel, "are idle speculations. It is to me certain that no inventions or discoveries which advance the human race happen before man is ready for them. Every great invention coincides with and directs some intellectual movement. It seems as if it was given to the world at the time when it would be useful, and not before. To you, Anthony, I speak as a fool, but I am a Jew; and, therefore, one who believes in the Prophets who belong to the People. Therefore, since the Prophets proclaim a Reign of Righteousness, when War shall cease, I must believe that my invention, which I am certain will abolish War, will also begin that Reign of Righteousness. With War, at least, will vanish ambitions, conquests, annexations, the chief burden of taxation, oppressions of Kings, conquerors, and alien races. All this gone, the world will be free to accomplish the destiny of man."

"I remember, Emanuel," Mr. Hayling interrupted, "in the old days you dwelt continually on a world where there should be no more war. This has always been in your mind."

"'Violence shall no more be in thy land; wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise.' These are the words of the Prophet—the Prophet Isaiah."

"Emanuel"—Mr. Hayling stood with his back to the empty fireplace, his hands in his pockets—"you have done a big thing. It is the biggest thing, I believe, discovered since the world began. But it is a terrible thing; one's imagination reels at contemplating it. To think of giving this instrument to the whole world—to the maddened Anarchist, to the hardened dynamiter, to the despairing outcast, to every madman who thinks himself injured by the world—I say, Emanuel, that I have been thinking of this thing ever since you first spoke to me about it. And I tremble. But, my friend, as I read your Prophets, the world has to become righteous before War ceases. This is to be the effect—not the cause—of righteousness, and we are a long way yet, I fear, from that thrice-happy time."

"That is what I wanted to say," murmured Francesca.

The room in which they sat was always dark at the brightest time of the day. Now, when the sun had set and twilight was beginning outside, it was so dim that those who spoke could only see the shadowy outlines and the indistinct white faces of each other. This made the talk seem, to one, at least, of the four, more solemn. Mr. Hayling spoke slowly—his was the speech of one who feels his way in the darkness, Emanuel's was the speech of one who stands on solid ground.

"Can one, by causing War to cease, bring righteousness into the world?" asked the Editor. "I think not. For my own part, I see interposed between the world of to-day and the world of that Vision obstacles innumerable. How are we to get rid of them? There is the man who sits upon the land and says—mine; there is the man who takes the workman's work and says—mine; there is the man who creates posts of great income and high place and says — mine. I see every man fighting for himself against every other man. Before the world of the Vision arrives we must be fighting every man beside his brother, not against him. Your new-born Righteousness, Emanuel, cannot exist in such a world as this. Why, the very thought, the idea, of a Common Life has perished. Yet the Common Life has, age after age, been recognized to be the best and noblest. It is gone. There is no more brotherhood left among us—except only when men stand shoulder to shoulder and go forth to war. That is the only time when men are brothers—brothers-in-arms. We are no longer brothers in work—brothers in art—brothers even in religion. The guilds are gone, the companies are dead, the monasteries are gone. And you would divide them still more. Let us rather restore that brotherhood of man in work, in communities, everywhere. Let us make them obey authority, and work by order, and practise righteousness, even if only, at first, *because they must.* When you have done all this, Emanuel, you will have gone far to make that Reign of Righteousness possible. I preach every week the Common Life, the Brotherhood, but no one heeds. I beat the air, and now I am talking my own leading articles," he added, with a laugh and a sigh.

"Go on, please," said Francesca. "Talk to us from another leading article."

"Well, I have been living among the people for twenty years, and I have eyes, and I have watched. I see what is going on, and

I guess at what is coming. I see—everybody must see—a whole world sinking deeper and deeper into a mad and selfish individualism, while a few voices are uplifted in expostulation. What is coming? The degradation of the working-man and the Reign of Riches—which is a very different thing, my friend, from your Reign of Peace. Perhaps something will happen to avert the evils before us. If not, I see tyrannies worse than any we have yet seen; law growing stronger for purposes of repression; rebellion rendered more and more difficult; men becoming more and more slavish. Nothing more horrible than the Tyranny of the Man who has the Bag. I have seen—myself—something of the power of wealth. It is a dreadful thing that a man should have any power by reason of his money. Young lady"—he turned to Francesca—"you have the air of wealth—I know not how. If you are rich, pray that your money may be taken from you; if you are poor, pray that you may never be rich. Believe me, there is no life to be desired more than the Common Lot with its chances and its burdens. Without War the rich will become richer, the poor will become poorer. War keeps up a caste which despises money-getting and fosters brotherhood and promotes ungenerous action; without war there will be a few rich kings and a hundred million slaves. Emanuel—leave us War until we have learned once more to live in brotherhood of work."

"We are told," Emanuel repeated, "that with the cessation of War shall come the Reign of Righteousness. How can we doubt the word of the Prophet?"

"You spoke of choosing the Common Lot," said Harold. "Did you deliberately come to live among the people?"

"You are Mr. Anthony Harold Alleyne," Mr. Hayling replied, slowly. "Well—I will tell you something. Perhaps it may help us in this counsel that we seek of each other."

He considered for a moment. "I had a big house once and a great fortune. I saw that my lot was not so desirable as the Common Lot. And I shook off the dust of my shoes and I embraced the lot of the working world. I have been a great deal happier, believe me, than ever I was before. I have lived in this world ever since. I have married in this world. . . . We must prove all things . . . and endure all things . . . and now I shall never go back to the world of ease. I am dead to it, and my

heirs, if I have any"—he glanced at Harold—"may inherit as soon as they please."

Harold listened without much curiosity. His mind was full of speculation concerning the effect of Emanuel's discovery. Besides, he suspected nothing. I know not what further revelations Mr. Hayling would have made or what reservations, but at this point the Conspirators were interrupted, and the subsequent proceedings rendered other revelations unnecessary.

"Who is that outside?" Mr. Hayling called.

CHAPTER XXXII

Greatness knows itself.—*Henry IV.*

The interruption began with a murmur of whispering voices and the sound of feet. The boy had long since gone, but the door was open—no fear that any of the people outside would want to steal copies of the *Friend of Labor*.

Mr. Hayling stopped; some one turned the handle of the door and hesitated. Then this person turned it again and opened the door timidly. It was a girl. In the dim light Francesca saw that it was Nelly. She stood in the doorway, and she held her handkerchief to her eyes. She was crying. An unseen hand behind pushed her gently forward. She was, in fact, shoved in—evidently against her wish.

"Why, Nelly!" cried Francesca, jumping up.

"Oh, Francesca! You here? Oh! How did you come here?" Nelly caught her hand. "Don't go away! Don't leave me! Anthony brought me—he is outside—he brought me—to tell his father—"

"To tell Mr. Hayling? Why, does he not know?"

"Who is this young lady?" Mr. Hayling asked. "And what am I to be told?"

"This is your son's wife, Mr. Hayling. I thought you knew. They were married nearly a week ago, at the Registrar's."

"My son is married, is he? Oh! Well, it is the custom of young men of his station." The father spoke with resignation. "He might have told me; but perhaps that is not the custom with young men of his station. You know my son's wife, then, Francesca? Young lady—I know only your Christian name—may I venture to ask further particulars?"

"Her name," Francesca replied, "was Nelly Bernard. It was a clandestine marriage, because her father, who is of the Jewish race, would not allow her to marry a Christian."

"Ah! But I had never learned that my son was a Christian."

"And so they have been married without her father's consent —or your knowledge."

"Well," said the bridegroom's father, quietly, "what is done cannot be undone. I am relieved, at least, from the responsibility of granting consent. I hope, therefore, that it may turn out for my son's improvement and my daughter-in-law's happiness. Let me look at you, my dear"—he got up and lit the gas-jet hanging over his table. "So, your name is Nelly? Let me look at you." He took her hands and looked into her face. "You are pretty, my dear, and you seem good." He kissed her. "Where is my son? Where is Anthony?" He held the girl's hand.

Anthony the younger came out of the front shop, where the evening shades prevailed. By the flaring gaslight he looked so common and so mean that Francesca wondered how the girl could endure him. But at the sight of the assembled company he straightened himself, lifted his head, coughed, and made a poor attempt to carry things off with an air of confidence, but with small success. He was evidently ill at ease and dejected.

"Well, dad," he said, trying to be airy, "I've got married, you see, and here is my wife, and a very good wife too."

"I hope so. Some sons take their parents into confidence, but never mind." He still held Nelly by the hand.

"I couldn't; because, you see, Nelly's father wouldn't have heard of the thing, and so, to prevent rows, we told neither him nor you, but just went to the registrar and were married on the quiet. Now it's done, it's too late to object, isn't it?"

"Quite too late. I should not think of objecting. You have, I believe, about five-and-twenty shillings a week. It is not much to marry on. I hope you will make it do."

"Oh," cried Nelly, "but he's lost his place! We've got nothing, nothing at all. Oh, what shall we do? What shall we do?"

"It's this way dad." The young man cleared his throat. "We're all friends here, I hope. It's this way. Last Wednesday there was a meeting of our Local Parliament, and I made a speech. Come, now, you first taught me that free speech is the greatest privilege of a free country. You're always preaching that, you can't deny it. So I made a speech, and very fine and free it was—all against property and the House of Lords and the Church and every blessed thing. A grand speech it was—

eloquent, they said, and powerful. Everybody said so. I believe it's in Mr. Gladstone's hands this minute, and I shouldn't wonder if he doesn't offer me something good. I've been considering for a long time whether to go into the political line or not. This decides me. I shall go into that line as soon as I get an opening."

"But about your place?" said his father.

"Well, I'm telling you. The Manager of our Works sent for me and asked if I was the speaker of that speech. I told him I was, and proud I was of it, too. 'So,' he says, 'you may just take yourself and your mischievous speeches somewhere else,' says he. 'We don't want destroyers of Property on these premises. So you may pack,' says he. That's what he said. After that I suppose you'll put in your paper that it's a free country, and everybody may say what he pleases?"

"You have lost your place for making a foolish speech?"

"The Manager said a lot more—all tommy rot—about neglect of work, and gas, and froth. I tell you what, dad, it's jealousy. It was him or me. He knew that before long he'd have to go and make room for me if I stayed. Well—every man for himself. I don't blame him. I call it lucky, too, because it now decides me. The Public Line for me, as soon as there's an opening. The next General Election, say."

"And meantime?"

"All I've got to do is to speak regular at our Parliament, so as to get known for a good man. That's what I tell Nelly. It's all right, if she'd only believe it."

"Meantime?"

"Why"—he shifted his feet uneasily—"there's hundreds of people only too glad to get hold of me if there's a vacancy. Not often that a man of my powers goes a-begging."

"Meantime?"

"Once in the House, you'll see how I'll make 'em sit up! Oh, I know! Question on question. Speech after speech. Then we turn out the Government, and it's Home Secretary, or nothing, for me."

"Very good indeed. Meantime?"

"Oh! Meantime—I don't know. Meantime, I can change my name and go on the boards with the banjo and show 'em how to sing."

"He thinks that he can sing and play well enough for a Music-hall," cried Nelly. "But he can't. He must practise ever so much first."

"Meantime?" the father repeated.

"He must look for a place somewhere. And we thought that perhaps you'd help, although we ought to have told you first. And if you won't forgive us either — and we have got no friends —then—I shall wish—" Tears filled her eyes again.

Francesca laid her hand upon Nelly's shoulder. "You've got one friend, dear Nelly," she said. "One friend at least."

"She has two at least," Mr. Hayling added. "But this is a question which must be answered somehow. Meantime? You have got to begin the world—how much have you got to begin it with? Less than a week's wages, I suppose. I had about the same. But then, you see, I had a trade—I was a mariner—and you, my son, are only a clerk. Mariners are scarce; clerks are plenty. What can I do for you? Silver and gold have I little; still, there is this house. There are two or three rooms up-stairs that you can have for nothing. There is also an afflicted woman up-stairs. Her affliction is such that she must get drunk once every day. This makes her a difficult companion for any one, especially a girl of decent tastes. Can you live with such a companion, Nelly? If so, you shall live rent free."

"No, no!" cried the son, shuddering. "We can't live here."

"I must, you see, and I do. It is my burden. It is the thing that is laid upon me. Well, we shall see what else can be done. And again—meantime?"

That question was destined to get no reply.

More steps in the outer office. Francesca, who was nearest the door, looked round. In the shop she saw Mr. Aldebert Angelo; behind him, in shadow—could it be?—Mr. Sydney Bernard himself. What did they want?

Mr. Angelo stepped into the room, leaving his brother outside. At the sight of the assembled multitude he looked astonished.

"Uncle Angelo!" cried Nelly.

"You here, Nelly?" he replied. "Certainly I did not expect to meet you, my dear — though why not?" He took her hands and kissed her—actually kissed her, though she had married a Christian! "And this is your husband — young Mr. Anthony — Anthony — shall we say for the moment Anthony Hay-

[See page 261

"FRANCESCA SAW SET UPON HER FACE THE SEAL OF HER OWN PEOPLE"

ling? I have been hoping to make your acquaintance, Anthony, my nephew, for some days — ever since I heard the — the unexpected news. I wish you joy — every joy — nephew Anthony!" He shook hands warmly with the young man.

"Uncle Angelo!" murmured the bride. "Is it possible?"

"And Nelly, too?" he asked. "My dear Nelly, I wish you every joy. You look every inch a bride!"

"Oh!" murmured Nelly. "Is it possible?"

"Mr. Hayling," this wonderful uncle continued — it is always the function of uncles to do the most unexpected, and, of course, the most benevolent of things—"Mr. Hayling, as for the moment I may call you, I came here in order to have a few minutes' conversation with you, alone, concerning the future of this young couple. I find a company assembled which I certainly did not expect. I believe, sir," he turned to Harold, "that you are Mr. Harold Alleyne; and I must say that of all places in the world, as Mr. Hayling will understand, this is the very last place I should have expected to meet you — as you will also understand in a few minutes."

Mr. Hayling sprang to his feet. "Stop!" he cried. "I forbid you to go on. If you mean what you say I forbid you to go on. What right, sir, have you to interfere with any plans of mine?"

"If you alone were concerned, Mr. Hayling—to call you so for a moment — I should certainly obey. But there are other interests—I allude to those of my niece—to be considered. I am sorry, Mr. Harold Alleyne, that her interests should conflict with your own."

"I do not in the least understand," said Harold, "what all this means. But as it is evidently not meant for my ear—" He rose and took his hat.

"Not yet, Mr. Alleyne. Wait a moment. It concerns you most intimately, and as we are all concerned in this most important business—this great discovery—" (Another great discovery? Francesca felt that if Mr. Aldebert Angelo was going to proclaim a second newly-invented method of revolutionizing humanity she should go off her head.) "All present concerned," he added, "I will announce it before you all. My business is very short. I have only to inform you, my lord"—he called Mr. Hayling "my lord," and all stared blankly at him — "that I have this day

acquainted your former solicitors with your present place of residence, and that certain persons, whose evidence cannot be doubted or disputed, will be brought here to-morrow morning in order to establish your lordship's identity beyond a doubt. Noblemen of your lordship's exalted rank cannot be allowed to let their very existence remain a matter of doubt. Besides, there are the interests of my niece—"

"Uncle Angelo!" cried Nelly.

"Emanuel!" cried Mr. Hayling, throwing himself back in his chair as one defeated. "You knew—you were the only person who knew. But you could not betray me! No; you could not. Besides, you never asked my name."

"These things do not concern me," said Emanuel. "I do not remember them or talk of them."

"What lord?" asked Harold, changing color. "He is not—surely—"

"And there are also the interests," Mr. Aldebert Angelo interrupted him with a gesture inviting attention, "of my nephew by marriage—your lordship's only son and heir."

"Son and heir?" cried Anthony the Younger.

"Patience, nephew. A little patience. Now, my lord, I assure you that there is no doubt possible about your identity. I have taken the trouble to establish that. Permit me to remind you of the past. It is five-and-twenty years since you told your solicitors that you were going away and that you should never come back again. You executed a deed authorizing your brother, Lord Guy, to enjoy your rents and live in your house. He died ten years ago. Since then the rents have accumulated. About fifteen years ago you were seen at Limehouse and recognized. It is not certain at this moment—or was not, until now—whether you were alive or dead. You have married a wife; you have one child, a son, who stands here, and is my nephew by marriage. You had resolved to live in obscurity and to die unknown; you had also resolved that your son should never know his true name and his rank."

"Oh, come, I say," murmured the son and heir.

"But, you see, other interests have arisen which do not permit this resolution to be carried out. Therefore, having discovered this secret, we must claim, in justice to my niece, whom we cannot allow to be thrust aside, that your son shall openly take his

true place in the world. That is to say, as the son of the Right Honorable the Earl of Hayling. He is Anthony Viscount Selsey, and his wife, familiarly called Nelly, is Preciada, Viscountess Selsey."

The long-lost Earl sat down and drummed the table with his fingers. Had he been convicted of forgery he could not have looked more miserably guilty.

"Well," he said, "you appear to have got up the case. If you can identify me, there's nothing to be said, I suppose. I am Lord Hayling. What then?"

"You Lord Hayling?" cried Harold. "And I never guessed. Good Heavens! I see the likeness now, and the name—and the Christian name!"

"I thought I could never be found out. After five-and-twenty years! Where could a man possibly find a more sure and safe retreat from the other end of town than this slip of an office in the Mile End Road? It never would have been found out but for this marriage. Well?" he turned on Mr. Angelo. "Now that you have found out the truth, what good will it do you—or anybody else?"

"Good? I must remind you, my lord, that it makes your son at least the heir to a very large property. We have not yet gone the length of despising property—despising property. Good? What good will it do? Really—"

"You lift this boy above the—the level to which he belongs, you give him wealth for which he is totally unprepared, you give him a position for which he is totally unfitted."

"Oh, I say," cried the son, "I should like to know the position for which I am not fitted."

His father made reply, speaking gravely: "My son, you have grown up with the ideas belonging to the life I intended you to occupy, neither wiser nor better than your neighbors. You are about to step into the ranks of those who are supposed to lead the world. You are at this moment unable to understand at all what has happened to you. Your income has been reckoned in shillings. It will now be—well, you will see. Your responsibilities will be such as you cannot even imagine. You will be the head—you—of an old and honorable house. Take care that your sudden elevation does not prove a fatal curse to you. Nelly, my child, you have yet to learn how strong should be the shoul-

ders of those who bear the burden of wealth." He sighed heavily. "I laid down that burden long ago. I could not, it appears, shake it off altogether. Harold, my nephew, believe me that I never meant this to be the end. I married—because I would share in full the Common Lot—a woman of my new position. I never intended that her son should learn the truth. When I saw you first the other day I rejoiced to think that all should go to you. And I am truly grieved for your sake."

"It needs not," said Harold. "I could never succeed so long as any doubt remained."

"As for me, I remain here; and, my friends, I pray you, one thing. There is no necessity for any one outside this room to know that the editor of this little rag is—what he is."

He looked round. Nelly had her hand on her husband's arm, and was gazing into his vacant face with wifely joy and admiration.

"Oh," she cried, laughing and crying hysterically, "you are quite wrong, Mr. Hay—I mean, my lord—about Anthony; he's fit for any place, and he can't have too much money. Oh, you don't know how clever he is; only he must practise a great deal more before he can go on the boards with the banjo, and I suppose he can't make any more speeches against the House of Lords and the Queen now he's—oh!—a noble lord himself. He understands that. You think you will ever be ashamed of him? No, no! Oh, you don't understand how clever he is!"

"If it depends upon you, Nelly," said her father-in-law, kindly, "I think we never shall be ashamed of him. But who will look after his manners, I wonder?"

"I will," said Mr. Angelo. "You may leave him with me and my daughter Clara, his cousin by marriage."

"You are extremely good, sir," said Mr. Hayling, dryly.

"As for manners," the newly created noble lord by courtesy made haste to explain, "I suppose I've got as good manners as they make. Look after my manners? Mine? You will? Not much! Look after your own, if you come to that!"

"Will you shake hands with me, Lord Selsey?" Harold made haste to allay the rising storm. "I am your cousin. My name is Alleyne. If I can be of any assistance at the outset of your establishment—"

"I suppose he must have an establishment," said the father,

grimly. "Well, since it is no longer possible to deny or to conceal anything, I will call on my solicitors to-morrow morning and instruct them. Yes, you shall have an establishment fit for your new position. It's a dreadful thing for both of you, if you only knew it. As for me—" At this moment there was heard a crash overhead as of cups and saucers flung upon the floor, and a beating as of a chair or several chairs. The Earl of Hayling held up his finger. "Listen!" he said, when the noise ceased. "I entreat you all, most earnestly, for the sake of an unhappy and much afflicted woman, to spare her the knowledge of her name and place."

Then the woman overhead lifted her voice and began to revile her husband. No fish-wife in Billingsgate ever used language so foul. Mrs. Hayling, remember, had married a common sailor before the mast, who was anxious to experience the Common Lot in all its branches. This fact shows the class of lady to which she belonged, and gave her the right, so to speak, to the strongest language which can be found in our tongue. The girls caught each other by the hand and trembled. The men looked at the husband with pity. He stood quiet, patient. Presently the storm died away and ceased.

"It is unusual," said Mr. Hayling, "for her to wake up in the middle of a drunken sleep. This is a repetition of the afternoon's scene. I did not expect it. Gentlemen, you have heard the voice of the Countess of Hayling. This is the language which her ladyship uses daily, when she is in liquor. Her ladyship is in liquor now. You see that. She must stay—with me—down below; she belongs to—down below. She must stay where she is; and, because she is my wife, I must stay with her. It is the Common Lot, Emanuel."

Mr. Angelo drew his niece out of the room.

"Nelly," he said, "we must now call you Preciada. Nelly who taught the banjo is gone. Preciada, Lady Selsey, sits in silks and velvets. You shall have Clara to stand by you until you have learned how to behave. Come, my dear, here is somebody else ready to forgive. It couldn't be forgiven for a little clerk, but for a viscount, of course—"

Then Nelly found herself face to face with her justly offended parent.

"Oh," she cried, "can you ever forgive me, father?"

"I couldn't," said Mr. Sydney Bernard, frankly, "till the present turn of things. You may give me a kiss, my dear. There's country-houses, my dear, and town-houses, and a rent-roll, my dear, and accumulations, Nelly"—he kissed her fondly between each revelation—"accumulations—they say a quarter of a million. Of course, it all belongs to the old man; but he's bound to look after you. Well, my dear, I've had a terrible bad time. I was ruined, and then you'd run away, and all. But your uncle found out, and I've paid off all—every one—in full, and with swagger. And now my name's as good as ever, and when your marriage is advertised, which it will be to-morrow in every paper all over the place, my name will be better than ever—father-in-law of a noble lord. Kiss me, Nelly, and, I say"—his voice sank—"your husband's a Fool. So much the better for you. Humor him and govern him. I'll take care of him on the Turf. Oh, you'll be a happy woman, Nell!"

Her husband came out, trying to look like a lord.

"Anthony," cried his wife, "here's father! We're forgiven."

"Forgiven? Why, of course." Anthony, Junior—son and heir—Viscount Selsey, laughed scornfully. "Who wouldn't forgive a noble viscount? However, I don't bear malice; you're Nelly's father, let's all be friends. Here's my hand, guv'nor; I forgive you, freely and truly; no more shall be said about the past; and, I say, I suppose—between ourselves—there oughtn't to be any temporary difficulty about a little of the ready, ought there? The right honorable the noble lord—the Viscount Selsey, and his lordship's noble consort—have got nothing in the world between them but eighteenpence and a couple of banjoes."

CHAPTER XXXIII

Who steals my purse steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing :
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.—*Othello.*

"I HAVE brought you," said Emanuel, taking a finished panel from its paper wrapping, "the last piece of work that I shall do for you."

"Why?" It was in the Mortimer Street "place of business," and the proprietor was at the receipt of custom. "Why, Emanuel? Are you dissatisfied with the pay? No one in the trade will give you more. Find a man who offers you more and I will go one better. If you don't work for me you will only go farther and fare worse. The next man will rob you, Emanuel. A man like you is made to be robbed."

"I am never dissatisfied with any pay. The man who robs me does me little harm, but he brings punishment upon himself to the third and fourth generation. Your pay is as good as any other man's; that is, good enough."

"Better, Emanuel, because there is no one else in the trade who understands work as I do. I tell you frankly there is no finer wood-carving than yours to be got in these days. You are an artist—a genuine artist."

"~~Perhaps. But~~ I am going away."

"Wrong, Emanuel—wrong. If you knew what was good for you there would be no more wanderings; you would settle down and work where the money is. If you would work steadily I could multiply your price by four in as many months. Think of it. Think of it. You are no longer young, Emanuel. The best years of your life are passing away. Very soon the skill and the eye will fail you. Think. A little money saved for your old age—"

"No, no! Money? I want no money. I must go away. I want to get back to the Desert. Here I am choked. But for two or three persons whom I am loth to leave I should have gone before this."

"Who are the two or three persons?" Mr. Aldebert Angelo sat on a carved oaken stool, while Emanuel stood before him, carved panel in hand, like a school-boy before his master. "I wouldn't mind laying a bet that your friends are next door to paupers. But go on, Emanuel, I like it."

"One of them is the man whose secret you disclosed, to the undoing of his son."

"My nephew," interposed Mr. Angelo. "My nephew, the Viscount Selsey."

"He is a wise man, because he understands the simple things. He knows that money and position have nothing to do with life. Strange that so simple a thing should be understood by so few. Our own Essenes, some of the Buddhists, some of the Christian monks; here and there a Spinoza—a Mendelssohn." Emanuel's voice dropped when he talked in this abstract and unpractical manner. "He laid down his wealth and station and went out to share the Common Lot. He has been a sailor. Now he is a preacher. He preaches through his paper. I am sorry to go away and to leave that man behind. When I return he may be dead."

"Humph! There is one pauper for you—a fool of a pauper, who exchanged a coronet for rags. Well, Emanuel, who is the second man?"

"His nephew Harold. I travelled once with him. We travelled together up the valley of the Euphrates. He is a young man who receives and understands. Some day, perhaps, he, too, will lay down the burden of his money."

"He's only got a thousand a year or so. That's not much to carry," said the bric-à-brac dealer, conscious of a much heavier burden. "Is there anybody else?"

"There is a girl."

"Ah!" said Mr. Angelo.

"A girl named Francesca. Harold loves her, and will marry her in good time. I love the girl as well."

"What is her other name?"

"I do not know. To me a person has but one name. She belongs to the People by descent; to the Spanish Jews, like you."

"Truly, like me. And so you like that girl. Very good. It was intended that you should like her. Well, it was not to talk about wood-carving that I asked you to call upon me this morning. Look here, Emanuel, you have never even asked my name.

Did it not strike you as rather curious that I should suddenly take all this interest in you? Why did I commission you to carve in wood for me? I did not particularly want any wood-carving done—not that I mean to lose money by you—and my brother did not want to take a lodger; he does not need to let lodgings, yet he sent you to his daughter. Why?"

"I do not know. I suppose he makes a little profit by taking me. I suppose you make a little profit by my wood-carving. It is the way of our People to make profit out of everything. What need to inquire?"

"Well, Emanuel, the truth is this: When you appeared, bringing that letter from Hamburg, I was at that moment talking to my brother about your wife."

"That concerns me not. My wife is dead, I have no wife."

"Oh yes, you have! But listen. We were talking, I say, about her fortune. It was, you know, a most enormous fortune. Was —alas! We were saying that it was a thousand pities that such a splendid inheritance could not be kept in the hands of the family—your family, or your wife's family—for the good of the People—our own People."

"Not my family. Whether her money is kept in her family concerns me not."

"You are as proud as Lucifer. Your wife's family, then, is mine. My name—my brother's name—is Albu. We are second cousins of Isabel Albu, your wife. Now, when we saw you, the thought came into my head that you might perhaps be the means of keeping this fortune from falling into the hands of the Christians. I did not know how—perhaps by reconciling you to your wife; but, indeed, I did not know."

"You could not reconcile me to my wife. You might bring my wife, submissive, to me. But I do not think you would succeed, unless she has changed indeed."

"No." Mr. Angelo laughed. "There's not much submission in that quarter. Well, Emanuel, you see, everybody's got fond of you. Nelly—now Lady Selsey—and Clara and that Francesca girl, they all swear that you are the best and the wisest man in the world. That's because you don't care for money. Girls, when they've got all that money can buy, never do care for money. It's a thousand pities, for their sakes, that you can't stay. And as for the fortune, I wonder how you'll take this awful news, Emanuel.

The vast great fortune—millions and millions!—it's gone—it's melted away—it's all stolen. A scoundrel banker who kept the scrip and received the *Rentes* has forged your wife's name, and stolen the money, and lost it on the Bourse."

"Has she lost her fortune? It is late in life for her to learn the lesson—for some a rude lesson—that we are all better without money."

"You are going back to the Desert, Emanuel, I think you said. You had better keep that kind of talk till you are in the Desert where there's no shops, and, I believe, no money to be made anyhow. To me it's sickening foolishness. Well, your wife has lost the whole of her money. All she's got left is a big house at a long lease; this she will try to let; she has got a pile of furniture, all good, and some very good; she has her jewels—fortunately she's fond of jewelry; she's got diamonds and rubies—oh, very good diamonds and rubies! I don't say they're not good; she has her books, and she has the things she calls pictures. She knows as much of pictures as one of your Arabs. There isn't a thing in the house worth a ten-pound note; not a single picture nor a piece of bric-à-brac, I give you my word, that I would so much as receive inside this house. I should be ashamed even to offer one of those things of hers to any of my friends. Why, Emanuel, you'd say that I should feel it for the third and fourth generation for such a robbery. It would be worse, man—worse than any robbery, because they would say my eye was gone—my eye—my *flair*, the sixth sense of an art dealer. But the diamonds and things are good, I admit, and so is the furniture. I believe that if everything could be sold at no more than a reasonable loss, she would get about six thousand pounds—six thousand pounds—out of her fortune of millions—six thousand pounds, and a few hundreds in the bank. Six thousand pounds—say two hundred and forty pounds a year, and that for a woman who has been spending ten thousand a year, and might have spent, had she chosen, sixty thousand a year."

"It is a change for her. The possession of money gave her, she thought, the right to authority. Now that right will disappear."

"I tell you this, Emanuel, not because I expect that you will grieve over the loss, but because you are concerned in a way which perhaps you have forgotten. A man like you forgets everything that has money in it. If it was only a wise saying about the van-

ity of money, you'd remember it. Well, it's this: when you married, about two-and-twenty years ago, you had no money."

"None. I lived by writing papers and by giving lectures on chemistry. I had no money then, or before, or since; I have never had any money. I thank God for it."

"You forget. On the day of your marriage there was placed in your hands a document called a Settlement. Do you remember the Settlement?"

"No; I remember nothing about any Settlement.

"This. Your bride being then of age and capable of doing this, settled upon you for life an income of fifty thousand francs, or two thousand pounds sterling. It was her gift, and a very princely gift, too, to her husband. The money was ordered to be paid to your account at a London bank."

"Stop!" cried Emanuel, quickly. "I have never had any money at all from my wife, not one farthing."

"Don't fly out. I am going to tell you. A month after the wedding you separated from your wife. You saw your wife once more, a year after. You separated from her again. That money has ever since been paid to your account every quarter—five hundred pounds every quarter—until the last quarter-day, when it ceased, because the fortune was all gone. Do you begin to understand?"

"I think I do."

"Twenty years. Two thousand pounds a year—nothing touched. You have now lying to your credit forty thousand pounds. Not less than forty thousand pounds. You are a rich man, Emanuel—you who have just been profanely thanking the God of Israel that He has given you no money. You are a rich man."

Emanuel put on his hat. "I shall go," he said. "I shall go away before I intended. Mind, I will never touch this money—I will not have it! Let her have it back. Take money of the woman who refused to obey her husband? Never! Let her have it back!" He turned to go.

"Stop, stop! my good friend," cried Aldebert. "Do you mean it? Do you really mean it?"

"What else can I mean?"

"Well, then, Emanuel, if you really mean that you are going to give back all this money to your wife, it isn't enough to say so

and to go off. If you do that, she will never be able to get it, nor will you be able to part with it. Will you trust me to arrange it for you? From what I know of your wife she is quite as capable of refusing to take your money as you are of taking hers."

"Arrange it as you will. She is your cousin."

"Very good. I thought you would say this. I have prepared a deed for you to sign. You will hand over the whole of this money to me in trust—in trust, mind—the interest upon it, amounting to about twelve hundred pounds, to be paid to Isabel Elveda, your wife, during her lifetime, and to her heirs after her death. Will that suit your views?"

"I have no views."

"Then here is the deed ready for your signature. As you despise money, you can't do better than punish your rebellious wife by giving her all you have."

Emanuel signed without even reading the paper. The assistant, or clerk, witnessed.

"Thank you. And now, Emanuel, you can get off for the Desert as soon as you like, though I believe that Clara wants a word or two with you first. And you really do find yourself more comfortable in a country where there's no money and no means of making any? Wonderful! If it wasn't for your face and your ways, Emanuel, I couldn't believe that you belong to the People. About your wife again. I shall not tell her unless I am obliged to that the money comes from you. I shall say it is saved from the wreck."

"As you please. I am not concerned about the money at all."

"Some men would like the credit of giving up such a lot. You don't seem even to care whether she knows that you have done it or not."

"There is no credit in it at all."

"Emanuel, you are going away—for how long you don't know. It is twenty-one years since you saw your wife. Perhaps—I don't know, she doesn't look that way inclined, I must say—perhaps she may have softened. Perhaps you may never again have the chance. See her once more. If she will consent to see you, call upon her. Let me arrange this as well for you."

Emanuel received the suggestion in silence.

Then he began to walk up and down the shop, showing unphilosophical signs of mental agitation.

"Why should I see her?" he asked, presently. "What good would it do for me to see her?"

"She may tell you something unexpected," Mr. Angelo replied, thinking of the daughter. "Come, Emanuel, I am sure you will hear something unexpected."

"Why should I not see her?" he asked, disregarding the chance of the Unexpected, which, as we know, always does happen whether we regard it or not.

"Why not?" echoed Aldebert.

"The time has gone by when the thought of her beauty moved me till I become faint and sick. I no longer lie awake with a yearning after my lost wife. She could not move me now. Yet —no, the old passion is dead. I will see her if she likes. Leave it with her. Tell her from me that I am unchanged, but that I feel no bitterness towards her. If she would like to see me once more before I go away—I think it may be the last chance—for even in the Desert, where I shall mostly dwell, many accidents may happen. I will not ask to see her. But if she wishes—if she consents—"

His face showed that the time of emotion was not gone by. He remembered the past. He turned and left the house without another word.

"A Dreamer!" Mr. Aldebert Angelo looked after him. "A Dreamer of foolish Dreams! And yet one likes it. There's a novelty in meeting with a man who doesn't want money."

CHAPTER XXXIV

In the reproof of chance
Lies the true proof of men.
Troilus and Cressida.

Mr. Angelo took the necessary steps without delay, transferred the accumulations to his own account, and gave instructions to his broker for the investment in his own name as trustee. That business accomplished, he made his way to Cromwell Road, and called upon his cousin.

She received him in her study, where she was sitting, as usual, over her papers. But her pen in those days was idle, and her thoughts were elsewhere. We must forgive a little temporary distraction to a woman who has lost such an amazing quantity of money.

"You come to bring me more bad news, cousin?" she said, giving him her hand. "I received your letter from Paris." Her manner was unchanged, but her face was pale and set. The two secretaries had disappeared. And already the pile of letters was greatly diminished, because the news, imperfect and garbled, had been published in the Paris papers first, and then in all the London papers. A millionaire does not become a pauper without the world's comment.

"Things looked very bad when I wrote that letter. I left your affairs in trustworthy hands when I could do no more, and I came back. Since then we have not been quite idle, and I have come to tell you the result."

"That I am a pauper?"

"No. A little to the right side of pauperdom. First," he took out his note-book—"I shall engage your attention for a quarter of an hour, I am afraid."

"What is a quarter of an hour to give to a man who rescues me from destitution? Pray sit down, cousin, and go on."

"First, then. You are aware that by your marriage settlement

an income of two thousand pounds a year was settled on your husband for life?"

"I believe so. You might, perhaps, inform the people concerned that there is no more money to pay that with."

"I have done so. As for the accumulations—"

"He has saved something out of his income? When last I heard about the matter, he had not drawn any of it for years. I am not concerned with his accumulations."

"He has never touched any of the money. It has all accumulated. His heiress would be his daughter."

Madame Elveda frowned.

"Francesca may have the money, then," she said, jealously. "I had hoped that my child would owe everything to me. But we do not know certainly whether he is dead or not. To be sure, he must be dead long, long ago."

Mr. Angelo leaned forward, saying, in a stage whisper,

"Cousin, your husband is not dead. I have seen him. I have conversed with him."

"Not dead? Then why—but it matters nothing to me. If he is living let him take his accumulations. What has he done all these years that I have heard nothing about him?"

"You have been separated from your People. That is the reason. He has been wandering about the world staying nowhere long. In the towns he works at wood-carving for his livelihood, and stays always among the People."

"I desire to hear nothing more about my husband. I should like to forget him if I could. I have nearly succeeded, and now you come to reopen a closed chapter—"

"Forgive me. It is best that you should know. Besides—but I will first speak of other business. I left your affairs, I said, in good and trustworthy hands. They seemed, at first, in a deplorable condition indeed. I have now, however, ascertained that out of the wreck will be saved or recovered a sum of forty thousand pounds—"

"Forty thousand pounds! It does not seem much out of two millions and a half. But I am thankful for anything."

"It is not much out of so much. Still, a sum of forty thousand pounds would be called by most people a very pretty little fortune. Twenty years ago I should have smiled incredulously had any one told me that I should, at any time, be worth forty thousand

pounds. In fact, you will still be comfortably off, only without the feeling of great power which your life-long possession of wealth unbounded must have given you. It must be," he continued, shaking his head and growing poetical over a misfortune which engaged his deepest sympathies, "like laying down the crown and sceptre. What a Queen! To possess those millions! —it was enormous. It was almost beyond the wildest ambition. Yes, few Queens have so much power as you with your millions! If you only knew the admiration with which I first approached you on that occasion when I dared to call you cousin—the admiration, the pride, the envy! As for us whom the world calls fortunate, we creep along, we creep slowly along. If we die worth a quarter of a million men will call us happy. But you—you with millions—always growing, and growing at the rate of seventy thousand a year at least, because you *couldn't* spend it. Oh, it is dreadful—it maddens a man—only to think of such a loss! Why, your daughter in thirty years' time would have been worth five millions at least; and in fifty years' time ten millions, and if it could be kept together, in a hundred years your grandchildren would have a lump fortune of fifty millions—fifty millions—fifty millions sterling. Oh, I cannot get it out of my head! I think of it perpetually. Day and night I cannot get it out of my head. What a misfortune! Millions, and all gone! And all gone! Cousin, I wonder—I really wonder—at your fortitude. Some women would have broken down utterly under such a blow; I myself under such a misfortune should have gone mad, or I should have taken to my bed and died. But you—you are of granite—you shed no tears, you do not rail at fortune, you sit calmly as if it were nothing worse than the smash of a favorite cup. Such fortitude is beyond me."

"I am not quite so brave as you imagine. But I try not to think too much of the loss. It relieves me inexpressibly, for instance, to learn that you have saved so much for me. And I need not say, cousin, that I am deeply grateful, and that I regret very much the cold reception which I gave to your brother and to you."

"That is nothing—nothing. Blood is thicker than water, cousin Isabel. It has been a happiness to be of use to you. Besides, we are proud of you apart from your fortune. You are a leader whether we like your Cause or not. You are a great lady—always a great lady, whether you have lost your fortune or not. I am

what I am—a dealer—a rich dealer. I know a lady when I see one. You can't make a lady by giving her money. She has got to be a lady from the beginning. There's a difference, for instance, between my daughter and yours. They both learn the same things, but they began differently and they think differently. Clara grew up in the rooms over the shop. Enough! You understand me, cousin Isabel. We do not now, any more than we did before you lost your money, wish to intrude upon you. But if I can be of any assistance at all to you, command me."

Madame Elveda held out her hand. "You are a good man, cousin." The tears appeared in her eyes. "You, and my daughter together, almost make me regret that I came out from the People and drove away my husband. But, if it were all to do over again"—she set her face hard again—"I would do it all over again. Remember that. I would do it again."

"That," said Mr. Angelo, "is none of my business. Perhaps if Emanuel Elveda had gone on living at home, the money would have been lost just the same. He would have dropped it into the ocean, I dare say, on principle, and then you'd be tramping about the world with him. A dreamer! a dreamer! But we like to have a dreamer among us sometimes; it can't be said, when Emanuel is about, that we all think of nothing but money. Now let me go on. You want to let this house. I have found you a tenant."

"So soon?"

"So soon. Yes. Things have happened opportunely. The tenant I propose to you is the young Viscount Selsey—my nephew by marriage." Mr. Angelo tried his best not to show pride in the connection, but the thing was too strong for him; he swelled visibly as he spoke. "My nephew by marriage," he repeated. "Son of the Earl of Hayling, who was lost and is found. Lord Selsey married my niece, Preciada Albu, daughter of my brother, who came here with me—Sydney Bernard, you know—came with me and said rude things. They are to be allowed five thousand a year, with a certain sum paid to their account for starting. As their adviser, I will take this house for them and buy all the contents as they stand—furniture, books, plate, bric-à-brac—but"—he looked round and shuddered—"not the pictures. I cannot conscientiously buy the pictures for them."

"What should I do with the pictures?"

"Stack them carefully out in the back-garden, and then put a lucifer-match to the lowest," replied the dealer. "That is the kindest thing you can do to the pictures. Believe me, I would buy them for this young couple if I could. Your books may be the greatest rubbish in the world. I buy them all the same. But not the pictures. And, of course, whatever you like to keep—"

"They would take everything in the house as it stands." Madame Elveda leaned her head upon her hand. "That seems simple. As for me, I have no sentiment about the furniture. I shall be able to get more fitting furniture for narrower quarters. Nothing here seems to belong to me—any more than if I was in an hotel. I suppose if one had grown up in a house, with friends and cousins"—here she stopped. "When one buys everything one wants and as fast as one wants it, there is no sentiment possible about personal possessions. That is, I suppose, one disadvantage about being rich. One cares nothing at all about possessions and belongings."

"Ah! when a man's got to think before he buys, he values things. I sometimes think," Aldebert continued, with a touch of sentiment, "that it must be a happier time when one is getting rich—growing bigger and stronger—than when one is rich and all the work is over. For me, I shall never stop working. Well, not to worry you with details, which you can have later, you may reckon on about sixteen or seventeen hundred pounds a year. If you will permit me, I will act as your agent, invest the money for you, and pay your dividends into the bank for you."

"I shall be infinitely obliged to you if you will do so much for me, cousin."

"It is not great wealth, but it is enough. You will continue to live much as you have been living, but in smaller quarters. However rich one is, it is not possible to eat and drink more than a certain quantity. I've sometimes thought it a hardship, but I don't know. And that, cousin, is all I have to report." Mr. Angelo put up his notes and took off his pincenez.

"Before you go, cousin," said Madame Elveda, "I must try to express my gratitude for all that you have done for me. You were right when you told me that, of all my friends, I should not find one in time of trouble who could help me. There is only one, I believe, who would go out of his way to help me. And that man knows nothing at all about business. A woman who

cuts herself off from her own people and her early friends and those who should advise her, becomes necessarily more or less a lonely woman. I have been so much occupied with my work, and I have so many acquaintances, that I have only felt the isolation of my life during the last few days, when it seemed as if I might actually become a friendless pauper. But you, whom I hardly treated with common civility, you came most generously to my assistance. How shall I thank you?"

"No thanks are needed, cousin. You are still, though you cast us off, belong to us. We of the People stand by each other. We must. It is the one lesson that we have learned during all the years of persecution. We must."

He rose, pushing back his chair. "You are good enough to say that you are pleased with my small services. May I ask a favor—I do not say in return—but a favor."

"Surely, my cousin. What can I do?"

"You have been so kind as to admit my daughter to your house. This time I ask a favor for my niece. She is, you know, Lady Selsey, and it's a tremendous honor to have such a connection. But Lord Selsey is young and inexperienced; he was brought up in ignorance of his rank; he knows nothing of society; they are to come here and to live quietly till they do know something. The only lady that Nelly—that's my niece, we call her Nelly though her name is Preciada; you know our ways—the only lady that Nelly knows is her cousin, my daughter Clara, and your daughter. When they have been settled a bit and the boy has learned a little—he'll never learn much—how a gentleman ought to look and talk, if you would call upon my niece it would be a kindness and a favor."

"If that is all—with the greatest pleasure; but remember, I am quite a poor woman now, and, therefore, powerless."

"Don't tell 'em how much you've lost. Don't tell 'em how much you've kept. The papers don't know; the paragraphs showed that. Then you'll keep some of your power. Money is power, isn't it?"

Then he put up his note-book and took his hat.

"I must say one word about your husband. I know you do not want to hear about him, yet it is only for a moment. After that, if you please, you shall never hear another word from me about him."

"On that condition, then. Besides, I can refuse you nothing, after what you have done for me."

"You never quarrelled—of course not. People like you don't quarrel. You separated. But you cannot fail to respect this dreamer of dreams."

"There is no man in the world whom I respect so much as Emanuel Elveda."

"He is going away again immediately. He is one of those who cannot stay in the same place long. He must wander. He will not make any money; he despises money; he sells his carving for anything that offers. Says that it hurts him little to be robbed, but that it hurts the robber to the third and fourth generation—that's the dreamy way he talks, as if the robber would feel it. Most of all he likes wandering in the Desert with the Arabs. Then he need do no work, and can dream away the days."

"Well?"

"See him once more, before he goes. It may be the last chance of meeting before he dies."

Madame Elveda received the proposition in the same way as Emanuel. That is to say, she made no reply for a while.

"Did he himself propose this meeting?" she asked, presently.

"No; I proposed it. The proposal agitated him. But he consented to my mentioning the thing. He leaves it entirely in your hands."

"I am twenty years older than when last we parted," she said, sadly. "Had you asked me twenty years ago, the mere chance of seeing him again would have filled me with rapture and with fear. I should have feared lest I should give way to him. I should have rejoiced at the chance of giving way to him. Now the old passion and the old emotions are gone. Yes; they are dead in me. I can only see in my husband the man who would subdue the woman. Let him come. Tell Emanuel from me that I should like to see him and to talk to him—if he wishes—once more before he goes."

"Clara," said her father that evening, "I've done a good stroke for your friend and cousin Francesca this day. I've got forty thousand pounds for her, or for her mother—and it's in my hands, not to be wasted and thrown away. That's a good

thing done. And I've made Emanuel and madame promise to meet each other. They are both as proud as the Devil, and neither will give way. Still—well—we've done what we can. Now, look here, Clara. Emanuel is going away, and if you don't hurry up, he'll go away without finding out that he's got a daughter."

"Oh, but he must not! he must not!"

"Now you see the result of your precious plan. You who thought yourself so clever! What I wanted was to bring them together—I said, at a little dinner in a private room. To be sure, Emanuel would just as soon be set down to a plate of whelks as to a dish of turtle soup, but I suppose one can't order whelks at the Café Royal. I should have said, when I'd got them together, comfortable, 'Francesca,' I would have said, 'here's your father—your long-lost father.' Not you—that's too simple for you. They must get to know each other, then they'd get to love each other. Then they'd suddenly find out the truth. You made quite a little play about it. 'What! Your name is Elveda? Elveda? Heavens! So is mine!' Very pretty it was. Only the little play hasn't come off."

"Who could possibly guess," asked the unsuccessful dramatist, "that two people would be together all this time and actually not be curious enough to know each other's name?"

"What will you do next, then?"

"Well, father, if my plan won't do, I must try yours."

CHAPTER XXXV

"Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part"

Poets have spoken of the regrets, the longings, the yearnings provoked by seeing, after long years, places, things, and persons once familiar and dear. We all revisit Yarrow when we grow old. Every man stands in a burial-ground growing every year larger and larger, filled with dead thoughts and dead friends. The monuments stand around sacred to their memories; lying monuments some, because their memories are not sacred, and one would fain forget them if that were possible. To stand before such a tomb, and to remember what that once was which is now buried there, is surely the most mournful thing that life has to give. Better close one's eyes to the monuments and pass on, forgetting that they stand behind one. Before such a tomb Emanuel and his wife were to stand. The thing within it was dead—they had killed it. They were going to revive the memory of the dead and then to part again—perhaps to see each other no more till, in another world, the relation of woman to man would be established once for all, without any possible chance of misunderstanding.

"Is it well with the Master?"

Melkah rose from her corner on the stairs where she sat half the day, a bundle of shawls and wraps. She looked up when Emanuel entered the hall; she rose and stood with some difficulty, for her joints were rusty with age. She threw back the shawl that covered her head and made a veil.

"I knew you would come back once more before you died."

Emanuel started. "Everything is the same—not the same house, I suppose, but like it. The hall, and the stairs, and Melkah—Melkah. You must be very old, Melkah."

"I am ninety and more. Sometimes I think I am forgotten. Who should remember a silly old woman like me? You will find

madame up-stairs. She is waiting for you—just as she waited for you twenty years ago. Be gentle with her, Master."

Emanuel passed up the stairs. Melkah sank back into her corner and covered her head again, and so sat huddled up.

Emanuel opened the door of the drawing-room. Yes; it was exactly as if the twenty years of separation had disappeared. It was not the same room, but it looked the same. Moreover, to his eyes, ignorant of Æsthetic, the furniture appeared to be the same. And at the end of the room his wife sat waiting for him, as she had waited for him twenty years ago. As she was dressed then, so she was dressed now, in the stately crimson velvet that she loved, with jewels round her neck and arms. As she walked down the room to meet him then, so she walked down the room to meet him now. As she stopped in the middle of the room then, so she stopped now. She gave him her hand, but he gently refused it. "We are either husband and wife," he said, "or we are strangers who have a common sorrow."

"If we have a common sorrow we are not strangers. But—as you will. Let us talk as strangers, if you please, or, rather, as old acquaintances."

"Nay. Let us talk as the dead talk who have a common past to remember. We have a common past, Isabel."

He took a chair, as he had done twenty years before, and placed it for her; then he placed another for himself. They sat facing opposite ways, but side by side, just as they had done twenty years before.

"I heard that you were in London," the dead wife began, "from one Aldebert Angelo, who is, as perhaps you know, a second or third cousin of mine. I thought that you must be dead, because I heard nothing about your work, and I thought you would do great things. It appears that you have abandoned science. Mr. Angelo tells me that you are poor—that you work with your hands. Is that necessary, Emanuel?"

"A man must live," the dead husband replied. "I do as much work as is required to keep me. I wander about the face of the earth. Since we parted, Isabel, I have wandered on foot all round the Mediterranean. Once I saw you—it was in the streets of Tunis. You were in a shop, buying things. I have never ceased to think of you; there was a time when I was drawn as by ropes towards you. I was tempted, for your sake, to trample on the

Law, and to make myself the most abject of men—one who sells his birthright of pre-eminence for a woman's kiss. Therefore I hastened to get as far from you as I could. I can now look back to the death of my short-lived wife with the tender memory of her beauty and her virtue and her sweetness. Her rebellion I have forgotten. It is but a month that I have to remember, but that short month has filled all my life."

"As for me, Emanuel, when you died I suffered—I may now confess—more pain than I thought I could feel for any man. There was not a day for months afterwards, when, if you had suddenly presented yourself, I should not have been ready to fall at your feet and offer obedience and submission." In her face, in her eyes, had he looked there, was again the same look of submission. "Fortunately," she went on, more coldly, "you did not appear. You are, I need hardly ask, still of the same mind as regards the position of women?"

"I remain still of the same mind, Isabel; that is to say, I remain in harmony with the Laws of God and the Laws of Nature, which are the Laws of God. You are still, perhaps, a rebel against both."

"If you please; call it what you like. For twenty years I have striven to uphold the equality of woman. Oh! I know all that you would say. I have against me the united forces of religion, tradition, prejudice, and brutality. If such men as Emanuel Elveda will not allow my contention, what am I to expect of the ignorant mass? I have succeeded, however, so far that the world has learned the actual condition of women in Europe, at least. I have shown what the enforced submission of women has led to, over this civilized continent. And I have gathered round me a band of women devoted to the cause of their own enfranchisement."

"Was this all you had to say to me, Isabel?—for we waste the time. I know what you have done. I have seen your book translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Russian. It is everywhere; and though I never read papers, I have heard your name and your work discussed on steamers and in railway carriages. Therefore I said to myself, 'Isabel remains rebellious.'"

"I wanted to see you, Emanuel, partly out of curiosity and partly because I had something to tell you. Out of curiosity, because I wished to see the face that could once move me so deeply.

It is changed, Emanuel. Some of the sunshine has gone out of your face; I think your eyes could no longer flash suddenly with hope, as they used to do when you had a dream more brilliant than usual. Oh! Emanuel, you were a dreamer of Dreams and a seer of Visions. There was never such a man as yourself; Jacob's Ladder was always before your eyes, with angels running up to Heaven. You were always yourself half-way up that ladder. With your science you would create a new world for mankind; with your preaching you would create a new man for the new world. When you left me, Emanuel, it was as if the color and the sunshine were taken out of life. You had ideas as well as dreams. Pity that your ideas and your dreams should be all thrown away."

"Perhaps they are not all thrown away. There are other ways of preserving thought besides the writing of books—better ways, some of them. Perhaps, too, a man may do better for the world if he leaves it his still imperfect thoughts unexpressed. He may be permitted to take them into his next existence; most likely they are but the reflection of passing events. What we call thoughts are generally nothing but a bald translation into words of things that we have seen."

"Dreamer still! As for me, I live for this world. What the next may be I neither know nor will I guess. Well, Emanuel, we have met again. Perhaps it was not wise. Yet there has been a past for both of us. I, for one, was curious to learn if I could look on your face and hear your voice without being stirred in the old way. I am satisfied on that point. We are dead to each other—or to ourselves. Yet it is pleasant to see your face again, Emanuel. It recalls the past, or some of it; and it brings no bitterness, even, now—no regrets. I wonder that there should have been a time when I could not look upon your face without a yearning of the heart."

"I do not wonder—thinking of the past; but you killed the very instinct of love when you rebelled against the Law. Still, you have a memory, Isabel. It should have kept you out of many extravagances which those women commit who know not love. Your curiosity is satisfied," he added, with the least touch of annoyance—no one, not even a Philosopher, likes being the subject of curiosity. "Let us now go on to what you wished to say."

"When we were married, Emanuel, I was rich."

"So I understood."

"I am rich no longer. All my money has been stolen and dissipated. I have now only a few thousands left of all my great inheritance."

Emanuel bowed his head—a gesture which may mean anything you please, but it always means that the speaker is followed and understood, so far.

"The settlement that was made upon you at our marriage—it was an annuity—can no longer be paid, Emanuel."

"I know nothing," he said, coldly, "about any settlement."

"Therefore I propose, if you will consent, to divide what has been saved out of the wreck—it will be something over forty thousand pounds—into two portions, of which you shall take one-half and leave me the other half."

"What?" He started into life. "Take your money from you? Divide with you? Are you mad? Can you think for a moment that I could do this thing? What do I know about your settlements? I have never taken anything from you when you were rich; do you imagine that I am going to begin when you have lost your fortune?"

She was silent for a moment. Then she replied, "You shame me now as always, Emanuel. I could not take money from you. Forgive me."

"You have lost your fortune, Isabel. I am not sorry. Great fortunes are the curse of civilization. The thing that our People desire perpetually corrupts us while we desire it, corrupts us while we work for it, corrupts our children when we leave it to them. So the gods make scourges for us out of our desires—Israel is cursed with the lust of gold. Why, but for your riches you would have shared the Common Lot." Madame Elveda started; her daughter had used those words. "You would have become a wife and a mother contented with the Eternal Laws of Nature. What have you become?—a Rebel; one who wages a vain and feeble war against the Order of Heaven. You are like a child shaking its fist at the moon. You are like the woman in the Rabbinical story, the nursery story, that first Rebel among women—Lilith. Your desire has been granted to you, with the consequences which you did not expect. You have had a lonely, a friendless, and a loveless life. Now that your money is gone it will become more lonely, more friendless, and more loveless. Oh!

I use not threatening words. These things are natural consequences. You have trampled on the Law. As the wineglass which was broken at our wedding, so shall your life be broken, scattered, and lost. But the Law remains. And the Woman shall obey the Man."

"I will not dispute with you, Emanuel. Say on."

"You have left your People and your Faith. Yet the Lord our God is one God."

"Oh, Emanuel! I could laugh at you, but the thing is too serious. I could be angry with you, but still it is too serious."

"My dead wife"—he looked into her face with a touch of the old tenderness—"for the sake of that short month, every hour of which lives in my memory, I cannot choose but speak the truth. Nevertheless, I have no longer the right even to speak in your presence of what I think. You are still beautiful, Isabel—but your face is hard. It should be the face of a woman whose days have been bathed with the sunshine of love. But it is hard. It is the face of a woman who has been fighting for twenty years."

"And yours, Emanuel, is the face of a dreamer still. Your eyes are full of dreams. Love has no place in your thoughts. Farewell, dead husband. The dead neither kiss nor greet each other, nor take each other by the hand. For them there is nothing but the past. Farewell."

They gazed in each other's faces for a while. Then Emanuel turned and walked slowly down the room.

When, some months later, Emanuel sat among the tents of certain Arab friends, that last farewell arose again in his mind. He saw his dead wife's eyes, and as he gazed into them their hard look faded, and there came again the long-lost eyes of love. And so that memory will remain with him to the end.

As he walked down the room his wife looked after him, just as she had done twenty years before. The rounding of his shoulders, the stoop of his neck, touched her with a sense of pity. Emanuel, she thought, was growing old. As for the words of warning, they fell upon her like seed upon a hard rock. She heard them but heeded them not.

He passed out and closed the door. She hesitated, then she walked down the room. It was all exactly like the last talk,

twenty years ago. She opened the door, and stepped out upon the landing. Below she watched her husband walking across the broad hall. He opened the door and went out, shutting it behind him. All exactly like that parting of twenty years ago. But this time it was the last parting of dead husband and dead wife.

She saw Melkah standing with her shawl thrown back, looking out after this strange visitor.

"Melkah!" she cried, "Melkah! Did you see him? Last time he came he prophesied a loveless life, while the child was calling from the cradle; again, he prophesies a loveless life, when the child has grow up."

"But she has left the cradle—she has left the nest, she has flown away. Francesca is gone! You must live without her. I told you—I told you! Get her a husband, I said. She was falling into fancies. But you would not. You have lost her. The child is gone."

"Melkah, you are a silly old woman! Why should Francesca be gone? How should I lose her? She will come back changed, because she will have lost her fancies. She will come back to be my lieutenant and my successor. Melkah, he is more obstinate than ever. His face—there was a time when I was silly over that face—is nobler than before. He is as full of dreams, he is as unpractical, and he is as obstinate as ever. I am glad to have seen the man once more, Melkah. It makes me proud to think that such a man loved me; yet I love him no longer. If I, who was loved by Emanuel Elveda, can stand up for the equality of women, how much more should those unhappy women fight for it who are mated with lower men?"

"The woman must obey the man," said the old woman of Damascus—who could never be converted.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy Sovereign.—*Taming of the Shrew.*

"LONELY—Loveless—Friendless!"

Madame Elveda sat alone. She had been quite alone for some days. It was the month of August, when everybody is out of town and work has come to an end—even work for the emancipation of women. There were no letters and no callers, and her fortune was gone. She was going to exchange her big house for a flat, and it seemed as if her friends had all gone too.

"Lonely—Loveless—Friendless!"

When one is strong and rich and busy, and surrounded by troops of acquaintances, the loneliness of life is not felt; when the work and the friends and the wealth vanish, the loneliness of life begins to be felt. It wraps a man round as with a mist. One who walks in a thick fog understands the loneliness of life. Madame Elveda sat alone in the great house. She was alone all day and all the evening; the silence of the house weighed upon her, and the words of her husband began to ring in her ears like a bell that tolls for a parting soul.

"Lonely—Loveless—Friendless!"

"Melkah," she said, "why should Francesca change? What did you mean when you said that Francesca would change?"

"She is gone to live among women who love. Those who love obey their husbands. You teach her one thing and she sees another. Francesca is like her father."

"Her father would command, not obey."

Melkah shook her head. She knew what she meant.

Lo! one evening while she pondered these things her daughter returned.

She stood before her mother, who looked in her face curiously and anxiously. Yes, the girl was changed. Her face was changed—it was filled with new thoughts; it was eager, the face of a girl who is occupied and busy with many things.

Her mother sighed and turned away. She recognized by maternal intuition that her daughter was changed—and she knew in what direction.

"You look troubled, mother. Has anything happened?"

"Yes, my dear, a great deal has happened. A most important change has fallen upon me."

"Mother!" Francesca cried, eagerly, "not a change in your opinions?"

"Not in my opinions, Francesca," she replied, coldly. "They remain the same. The change, however, will greatly reduce my power of making them effective. You will understand directly that if you could have been a help to me in the past, when I had every kind of assistance that wealth could procure, you can be ten times as useful to me now."

"When you *had?* But, my dear mother, have you not still—has any misfortune—"

"What has happened is this: A month ago I was the possessor, I supposed, and you were the heiress, of a great fortune. I inherited a fortune of millions. It was invested chiefly in French stocks and securities. We never spent—we could not if we tried to spend—a fifth part of our income. The rest accumulated, as I thought. About sixty thousand pounds of savings were invested every year. I kept a very careless account, because I had an agent in whom I entirely trusted. Still, I knew what was done with the money, and I kept in my own hands the power of selling out or changing investments. Nothing could be done without my signature. This gave me perfect confidence. Now, by these accumulations, my original fortune ought to have been increased during the last twenty years by another million. You should therefore be the heiress, if you succeeded to-day, of two millions and a half—that is to say, about a hundred thousand pounds a year. That is to say, again, I was probably the richest private woman in the world, and you were certainly the greatest heiress."

"Oh!" Francesca clasped her hands. "We have actually lost our fortune? Lost our fortune? Oh, it is Providential! I was going to tell you, mother, that I wanted to give up my fortune—or my succession—and to join the people who have no money at all."

"How would you live?" Her mother's voice showed no sympathy with this proposition.

"I should carry on Nelly's music-teaching. Oh, I should do very well."

"Why do you wish to give up your fortune? With money, child, you can move the world. Without it, you can do nothing."

Francesca shook her head. "The only real power that one woman or one man can have over others is by example and teaching. One woman who lives the better life may shame a hundred who live the lower, but for her."

"You talk like—your father, child. He was a dreamer. But of dreams there comes no good."

"Well—but if the fortune is all gone we needn't dream any longer; we can act. Why, it was only the other day that Mr. Hayling—Lord Hayling, properly—prayed solemnly that all my riches might be taken from me. It is like an answer to prayer. We have no money. Oh! a month ago I should have felt like the *Cigale* in winter. No money! the poor, shivering, naked *Cigale!* And now I am like the Pilgrim who dropped his burden and went on his way rejoicing and light-hearted."

"You rejoice, Francesca? You rejoice that I have lost my fortune, and with it my position and my power? What does this mean?"

"Oh, mother! if your position and your power depend only on your fortune, what are they? No; your power will remain, if it is worth keeping. What would you have been had there never been any fortune at all?"

"This is not a time for speculation. Let me go on. I heard of this reverse first about three weeks ago. Had I known that you would rejoice in poverty I would have told you; but I feared to distress you. I wanted you to go on working out the problem on which you were engaged undisturbed. But part of the thing has now got into the papers. I received letters asking if the report is true, so I think it is best to tell you at once, now that you appear delighted by my misfortunes."

"No, mother; not your misfortunes. It was much best to tell me. Oh, it is gone! Is it really gone? Mother, I never understood until this moment what a horrid thing that money has been to us all along. Men pray for money; they dream of money—much money. They can't have too much money. And see! it has made me what I have been—not a woman at all—an artificial creature, an unreal creature, dressed like a

woman, talking rubbish about art and — and — mother, I cannot say it."

"If, Francesca, you were able to help me before," her mother continued, pursuing her own thoughts, "you are able to help me ten times as much now. We shall live in a flat, we must give up our dinners and our evenings, we must practise economy in small things — in fact, I clearly perceive that I can no longer be the Leader that I was. It remains for you to be a Leader of another kind. You will write; you will speak. Oh, you don't know, child, your own cleverness. You can do anything you please. You will carry on the Cause, Francesca." For the first time in her life the girl recognized in her mother's voice a touch of weakness — an appeal for help. Her heart fell within her, for, alas! she could be of no more use to her mother. She and the Cause were parted. "I have the knowledge, Francesca. I used to have the wealth, now I have no more money; I, who was born to such immense treasure; but you, my dear, with the eloquence of beauty and of culture, you can use my knowledge as a well to draw from, and you will carry all before you. Francesca, what do you mean? Why do you look at me like this?"

"There is a man, mother, living near us — over there — who was also born to a great fortune and to a great position. Long ago, more than twenty years ago, he gave up everything and went away to become a common working-man. He was a sailor before the mast. He wanted to have the Common Lot; he married a girl of his adopted station — that must have been the hardest thing of all — he has enjoyed the Common Lot ever since. His wife has become a drunkard; his son is a shallow-brained fool; he has forwarded few — if any — of the things he preaches. Some would say that his life has been a failure. But he does not think so. He has had the Common Lot; he would not change if it were to do all over again. Suffering and hard work and disappointment — but to share the Common Lot, he says, is the best that can happen to man."

"What is this man to us, Francesca?"

"There is another man over there" — again Francesca pointed in an easterly direction — "who gave up his friends and his career twenty years ago in order to keep his freedom. He wants no money, he will not try to make any — he despises wealth. So long as he is free to live his life in his own way he is

[See page 962

"'YES,' SHE SAID, 'I WILL LEARN TO RESPECT THE PEOPLE'"

happy. He walks about the world, he works with his hands. He is quite—quite—free. And he is quite—quite—happy; and wiser, fuller of dignity and self-respect than any other man that ever I knew."

"Again, Francesca, what has this man to do with us?"

"It is the Common Lot, mother, that I have seen and learned. It is the freedom from wealth that I have learned to envy. Mother, how was it made, this great fortune of ours?"

"It was made—how does it concern you, child, to know how it was made? It was made by one man, and, at least, honestly."

"All that immense fortune made by one man, and that honestly? Since I have been away, mother, I have heard a good deal about money, and I have been thinking. Formerly I used to believe that our wealth arose from a long succession of noble ancestors—Moors; now I know that this could not be. How was our fortune made, mother?"

"My grandfather made it, Francesca. He made it by contracts for provisions for the British Army in the Peninsular War. Now you know as much as I know. You may learn, at the same time, though the knowledge may not make you any the happier—knowledge never does, I think—that he was a self-made man, and began with nothing. There is nothing noble about your ancestors at all, at least on my side. On your father's side—yes. They were, before the Revolution, nobles of Spain, who laid down their titles when they had no further reason for concealing their faith."

"He was a contractor, this rich great-grandfather. So our fortune was built upon bacon and flour. I am glad, at least, that it was not made by sweating workgirls. Now we have lost it—well, we have lost it. Can you regret it mother?"

"Regret it? Are you mad, child? Do I regret power, authority, respect, consideration?"

"Yes, yes; but without the money you will have just as much consideration and respect. Your work remains, you have written the only great book on the present condition of women. You are an authority on that subject, whatever happens. I suppose you could have written that book just as well without so much money."

"You know nothing, Francesca."

"I know very little, it is true. But I have learned something. You should have kept me with you in this Harem. But you let me out, and I have learned many things. Mother, why did you let me believe that we were Moors?"

"There was a reason, my dear. I wanted so to separate myself from my own People that you should never know that you belonged to them. It was for your sake, Francesca. I wanted you to start without the superstition and the prejudices of the Jews. I would have you free."

"Yes, I was free. But if freedom means seclusion from the world— Oh, mother, believe me, I am not reproaching you, I understand why you did it. But I have learned the truth, and I rejoice. I am one of that great and immortal race who have had so wonderful a past, and are going to have so wonderful a future."

"Strange!" said her mother; "and I have taken so much trouble to prevent you knowing the truth. Well, child, you are a Jewess. Your great-grandfather, who made all the money, was born in the Ghetto of Venice, but he was of a Spanish family. On your father's side you are still more Spanish, because for many generations the Elvedas were a noble Spanish family, secretly practising their ancient faith. And so you rejoice that you are a Jewess. Wonderful! By their Law the woman obeys the man and is subject to him. And you rejoice that you are a Jewess!"

"Yes, I rejoice. And oh! the money is all gone, and I am free to work and live as the others work and live. And I shall no longer sit at a hotel window and watch the Passing Show."

"You will desert me, Francesca? Oh, child"—the mother's eyes filled with tears—"you will desert the Cause and your mother who has been the leader of the Cause?"

"I must, mother, I must. I think that you and your friends are wrong from the very beginning. You say that woman is man's equal. No, no, no. Nature made him stronger, larger of brain, and larger of heart. He does things which woman cannot do. Woman is below man. My new teacher says it is the Law of God—'He shall rule over thee.' My little study in comparative religions did not include, so far as I went, a study of that Law, but there is the Law of Nature. Why, everywhere it cries aloud that the man is

greater than the woman! You repudiate the submission of the woman over the man she loves. Why, all over the world, everywhere, in every country and in every age, the women cheerfully and happily yield submission and obedience to the men they love. Why not? It is a part of love. I have never understood until now how their obedience brings order and happiness into life. Now I have seen it and I know what it means. Oh, women are not the equals of men! Let us cease to fight against the Laws of Nature."

"You strangely resemble your father, child. I have never seen the resemblance so strong. You talk like him and you look like him." This, had madame known, was not an unlikely result of six weeks' daily intercourse.

"When I came back to this house," Francesca went on, concealing nothing, "I felt as if I were entering some Temple of a False God. I remember the things I had seen here, heard here, said here. It is a Temple of a Religion which shuts out humanity. The preachers are not real women; they must destroy their nature before they can preach and teach these things."

"You are frank indeed."

"I want you to understand exactly what I mean, mother. You wanted me to join in the advocacy of unreality. Why, so I might, because I knew nothing of the world. Men and women and all their ways—they were puppets—and I was to preach to puppets doctrines of which I understood not one word. But it is all changed. Mother, I am glad that you are leaving this great house, which is full of horrid memories and unreal thoughts. I could never come back to it. The place weighs upon me."

"Again, Francesca, you are frank, even to cruelty."

"Forgive me, mother. I would not pain you, yet I must needs speak the truth. About submission and obedience, again, I will show you how much I am changed. There are two men—two—to obey either of whom—both of whom—would be a joy and a happiness unspeakable to me."

Her mother heard without asking who they were.

"One of them is a man to whom I would be a daughter—a wise and good man, the man who wanders about the world and meditates; the other is the man whom at your order I sent away. But now I know—I know very well—what the happiness of my life might be."

"Child! Say no more; it is enough. All my lessons have been thrown away. I have lost my daughter as well as my fortune. Perhaps it would have been kinder to have concealed from me the former loss till I had partly resigned myself to the latter—"

"No, mother! No; you have not lost me! Throw away—with the horrid money—the hopeless Cause!"

Her mother sighed.

"You do not understand," she said. "It is my life. You give up me when you give up the Cause. Oh, I have brought you up to be my successor! Everything you learned, every book you read, Francesca, was chosen by me with that object. I kept you apart from other girls. I allowed you no playfellows or friends, so that you should imbibe no other ideas than those I wished. You were nearly eighteen before I consented that you should go among other girls, and you were by that time strong in the opinions that I had cultivated—so strong that I was not afraid of you. Yet, after you have passed the ordeal of Newnham and its conflicting thoughts, when you are already arrived at one-and-twenty—an age when you should be confirmed in opinion—you suddenly abandon all the things you once held holy and worship the things that you once derided. Francesca, what did I say when we spoke last about these things? Have I not a right to be disappointed?"

"Yes, mother, you have. Yet, at the same time, have I not a right to freedom of thought? It is not a sudden change. It began when I sent away Harold, and afterwards considered and tried to understand what love meant, and I found that in spite of my fine words nothing would have made me so happy as submission—complete submission, mother, to his will. After that, what was left of the Cause? It was blown to the winds. Now, mother, let us talk about other things. What will you do?"

"I shall carry on the work of my life," Madame Elveda replied, coldly, "as long as my life lasts. But we can no longer talk about that. Let us consider your future. I do not know what you really contemplate. In the flat that I shall take there will be a room for you, Francesca, if you choose to occupy it. Perhaps you will prefer the Common Lot with your new friends. If these Jews—our own People—do not want money, a very remarkable change must have come over our People. Perhaps, in

time, you will discover that the Common Lot is not quite so enviable as the Lot that is less common—of wealth and culture and manners and self-respect. Until then we will talk no more about it. Until then our lives, which have hitherto flowed on together, will run apart. Good-bye, Francesca." She gave her daughter the coldest of kisses, and turned to the study table and her papers. She sat a long time thinking.

Presently she took some note-paper and wrote a letter. It was as follows:

"DEAR HAROLD,—You will be sorry—unless you, too, have acquired the new ideas which now possess Francesca—to learn that I have been robbed of nearly the whole of my fortune. Enough remains for me to live upon with a certain amount of ease. Francesca, therefore, so far from being a great heiress, will inherit from me a very moderate sum of money. When you came to me two months ago I told you that the answer was in Francesca's hands. That was strictly true. I had already so influenced her that I knew beforehand what the answer would be.

"I did not ask, at that time, how far she had consulted her heart. It was enough for me that my daughter remained free to help me in my work.

"She will never help me in that work. She has deserted the Cause; she has acquired—I know not how—opinions directly opposite to mine.

"There is a new Francesca. Should you feel impelled to put that question to the new Francesca, you would perhaps—I know not—receive another answer.

"I hoped that Francesca would prove superior to the weakness of her sex, and never marry. But since that hope seems likely to be shattered, there is no man to whom I would more gladly give her—whether in riches or in poverty—than to you. I must explain to you that twenty years ago, when I separated from my own People, I resolved that my child should never, if I could help it, know even that she was descended from the Jewish race. Therefore I told her that we were Spanish Moors. This deception was meant to be harmless; it may have proved mischievous if Francesca were suspected of being cognizant of the deception or the truth. Your affectionate friend,

"ISABEL ELVEDA."

She folded the letter and put it in an envelope.

Then she fell to thinking again. Her daughter gone—her fortune gone—the friends of prosperity gone.

"Lonely—Friendless—Loveless!"

At five Melkah, according to her wont, brought her a cup of tea.

"Did you see her, Melkah? Did you talk to her?"

"She is changed. I said she would be changed. I saw the change in her face and in her eyes. It is in her voice. She has shaken off her fancies—she is another girl."

"I believe it would be better for her to marry, Melkah. It is not every woman who can develop her higher nature without love. Afterwards she will see things as they are."

Melkah shook her head. "The child should be called Eve. She is all wife and mother. She thinks no more about your cause. She is a woman who has joined the women. She is ready to obey like all the rest. She is one of us—I see it in her face. She has found out, somehow, for herself, the Law of God."

Madame Elveda turned her face as if to reply. It was a hollow, haggard face. Melkah sank down upon the hearth-rug, and crouched in silence. She did this every afternoon, waiting for speech of her mistress and for the teacup. This afternoon there was nothing said. Melkah fell asleep, as old people will. When she woke up, two hours later, her mistress still sat gazing into space, hollow-eyed and pale. The tea stood untouched. Melkah sat up, awake in a moment to a sense of disaster.

"What is the trouble?" she asked.

"Melkah, you have been with me since I was a baby—forty-two years you have never left me. Will you leave me now?"

"Why should I leave you? I am an old woman—my brothers are dead; you will close my eyes and bury me with my People. Why do you talk of my leaving you?"

"I have lost my money, Melkah. There is enough left to keep you and me. But I am now a poor woman who once was so rich—so very, very rich that all the world envied me. I was so very rich that I could afford to throw away love and the man I loved, and to neglect the money that made me rich—so that is gone, and well—and my daughter who has left me. Now there is nothing left but you, Melkah. What did Emanuel say? 'Lonely—Friendless—Loveless.' Only you left to me of all my possessions, Melkah."

"Nay, the child has only left you for a time. She will return."

"Perhaps. I am weaker to-day than I have ever been before in all my life. Perhaps, Melkah, Francesca is right. Better the Common Lot—to suffer with the rest—rather than to stand apart and fight against the Common Lot. Yet—no, no, no!" She sprang to her feet, and stood with clinched hands and hard eyes. "No! If I had to do it all over again I would act in exactly the same manner. I will obey no man!"

CHAPTER XXXVII

Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song.—*Spenser*

They were gathered together once more—they though it would be for the last time—in the little garden behind the little house, with the crowded Field of the Dead on one side and the crowded Street of the Living on the other. Francesca sat on the garden bench, her hands clasped, her head hanging in the deepest dejection. She had been pleading with Emanuel to remain, but vainly. Harold and Mr. Hayling—Lord Hayling—Anthony—stood or leaned against the wall; Emanuel walked up and down the short garden path or stopped to speak. It was the hour which most he loved—the twilight after sunset, when in the soft shades the burial-ground stretched out and became a vast plain and the houses seemed to recede. But this evening he was agitated. His face, always serious, was full of trouble. When he spoke it was in a quick, nervous way, unlike his usual utterance. The philosopher had lost his calm. Yet, because it was their last night together, and on the morrow he would depart, he essayed to speak as one who may never more return. Francesca continued to plead with him. "You will not go yet, Emanuel?" she said. "Oh, not yet! You will give us one more month — one more week even? We have so much to learn from you. Think! You have placed me on the threshold, and then you go away and leave me helpless!"

"You are on the threshold," Emanuel repeated. "Why, child, is not that enough? How many are there who even reach the threshold? Once there, if you are resolute and patient, the doors of the Temple will open to you, and you will penetrate as far as the Holy of Holies—wherein is the Presence," he added, solemnly, "upon which none can look and live. Yet if he dies, he then begins to live. What more can one do for a disciple than place him on the threshold? But you are a woman; you will need a leading hand. Well, you will have Harold always instead of me."

Not another word had been spoken by either since Francesca

owned her allegiance to the Law of her own People touching the submission of woman; yet Emanuel assumed the conclusion of this love affair; and neither said him nay. Was this a time for maidenly pretence?

"I want you — you — Emanuel. We all want you, not each other."

"I must go. Man's life is a march—or is it a battle-field?—where he sometimes finds a time of truce and rest. Then he sits down and looks about him. If he is fortunate, as I have been, he finds friends among the men and affection among the women. But friends or no friends, he must not stay too long. Very soon he must get up and go on again, with the memory of his friends to console him, and the image in his heart of those with whom he has talked. It is time, dear child, that I must get up and go away."

"Why must you go, Emanuel?" asked Harold. "Why not stay with us and wander no more? There are battles enough to fight here among all these people — your own, if you like—without going into the Desert."

"The houses choke me. I cannot see the people for the houses in which they dwell. I cannot hear their voices for the noise of their work. In the silence of the Desert I can listen to the voice of man, and I can see the soul of man. But not here. I must go."

Yet he was agitated, shaken; the drooping figure of the girl moved him, her entreaties shook him, he could not stand still, he could not even remain silent.

"I must go," he repeated. "My mind has been shaken. Past things have been revived. I have seen persons whom I never thought to meet again; old emotions have been awakened, even old regrets. My child, I cannot even talk with you without being reminded continually of — another person." He spoke with an effort. "I must endeavor somehow — by distance and forgetfulness—to regain my old tranquillity. I must not suffer new ties of friendship to bind me—even to you, my friends, my children. They will but embitter my closing days with regrets and longings. Let me go, and remember you only as one stage of the journey, just as one remembers the day when one was thirty years of age."

"You will not forget us, Emanuel," said Francesca. "You

cannot. But you can go out of the crowded streets, and we will follow and be with you. The new ties of friendship should bind you more strongly to the humanity of which you think continually. Emanuel," she laid her hand upon his arm, "be persuaded."

"Nay, I must go. I have stayed too long already. It will take a long time to recover the lost tranquillity. I must go." But he showed in his voice that he fain would stay.

"Be persuaded, Emanuel," said Lord Hayling, or Anthony. "Stay a little longer, if only to support and encourage a man who is sometimes tempted to grumble, though he has got all that he asked. Your voice the last two months has been a help and a stay. Things sometimes seem rather too much even for the Common Lot. When I say that the Countess has this day appeared before the Magistrates for being drunk and disorderly—"

"My friend, you want no help," said Emanuel. "You have got all you asked—and more."

"Be persuaded, Emanuel," said Harold. "There is the great Discovery. Will you leave that upon my hands?"

"My Discovery!" said Emanuel, answering Harold. "That is another reason for going away and staying away. My Discovery, of which I thought so much!" He laughed gently. "I suppose there never was any man so joyful over any Discovery as I was while I tramped across Russia with the thing in my head and no means of putting it down on paper. I foresaw—you all know, I told you all — what I foresaw — the Dream of the Coming Heaven—the Golden Age—the Saturnian Reign, the event of the long expected Prophecy, the age of Peace and Good-will. By me —man was to abandon forever the chief curse of humanity; by me—there were to be no more wars; not because men had learned for themselves and understood why war should be abolished, but because I—I myself—a humble Jew driven with blows and threats out of the Czar's realm—had discovered an instrument which rendered war impossible! Wonderful, was it not?—wonderful! Never any man more puffed up with pride than I was. I tried to speak humbly, but I was filled and blown out with pride. You remember my insolence and my pride, Harold."

"I remember nothing of the kind," said Harold.

"I thought that I would give you the Discovery. It should be yours to announce it, to prepare the way for it, and to present it to the world. What would it matter who discovered it? I knew

that I should have the pride of it, all my life. So that was the meaning—that, and nothing else, as I now perceive—of my false humility. I would go away again and remain unseen and unknown, rejoicing all my life to think that my invention was working its way, and that the world was changing. I had no doubt—no doubt at all—of what would happen."

"And now, Emanuel?"

"Now I perceive that it was but another Dream. I have been a Dreamer all my life. Nothing in the world makes men more happy than dreams of things impossible."

"Your invention," said Harold, "is no Dream; it is a reality—a reality more awful and more terrible than I can grasp. That is no dream, but the biggest thing that chemistry has ever yet achieved."

"Yet a Dream. Oh, my friends, let me confess! I can never again lift my head for the shame that has fallen upon me."

"Oh, my Master!"—Francesca sprang to her feet and caught his hand—"you to speak of shame! You, whose heart is full of love and wisdom! Ours is the shame to be so far—so far below you. Shame! And for you?"

"Shame, child, because I was so short-sighted that I thought this thing, which I now perceive would fill the whole world with Devils, was the Gift of the Lord. And it was your doing, child—you first made me doubt. A woman sees quicker and farther than a man. But I was dreaming—I was dreaming."

The girl bent over him and kissed his hand, while her tears fell upon it.

"Let me confess," said Emanuel, "let me confess. I am a Dreamer of Dreams. I dwell in the world which is not." He looked across the Field of the Dead, his right hand shading his eyes as if he saw on the Plain of Death the world of his dreams. "No man so happy as one who can see far beyond the present the future that shall be. We have been a nation of such Dreamers, because for two thousand years we could not bear to think upon the present. Yes"—his eyes were the veritable eyes of a Dreamer—"all my life I have dreamed of the Great Prophecy Unfulfilled—the greatest of all the Prophecies—the Reign of Peace and Love. All the obstacles—greed of gold, selfishness, lust for power, war, ignorance, shortness of life—all these things seemed to me capable of being removed and abolished, if men could

be for once persuaded to endeavor after that time. I thought of the wise men of the world filling the brains and firing the hearts of all the rest with a burning desire to achieve this time—the rage of the Crusade would be a poor and feeble emotion compared with the ardent passion after Righteousness which would be roused among all mankind by the exhortations of these Prophets. I have had this vision always, I say; I have ardently longed and prayed to do something, however small, to help that time. Then I came to understand that as man's spiritual strength rises out of his physical necessities and instincts, so that the soul grows with food as the body, and must be nourished with new food as the body, and as the highest love grows out of the lowest instinct, so the advance of man has been always step by step with his advance in physical knowledge. For this reason the change for good or evil during the last sixty years is unparalleled by any change in any previous thousand years of the world's history. Therefore I thought some great physical discovery might at any time be made which should give to the world one more decided step. I could not alleviate or prevent disease, or lengthen this our short span of life, or make men give up the foolish pursuit of riches. But I could—and did—invent a means whereby, I fondly thought, war should be rendered impossible for all future time. You know the rest, Harold. You remember how I announced to you, mysteriously, my Discovery. You remember how I revealed it—how, in this garden, after we had spoken of the continuity of the human race, which seemed to make it so much more precious. The continuity of life is, I know, not a new doctrine. I have not invented or discovered this truth. It has been taught by many learned Rabbis in many forms. It is sufficient for me to know that what we do in this present life we do for ourselves in the ages to come. Therefore my Discovery, as I believed, would be not for what we call posterity, but for ourselves—ourselves—ourselves. You remember how we talked—"

"As if we could ever forget!" Francesca murmured.

"Then you, child, brought your doubts. See how a woman may bring to shame the man who thinketh himself wise. You spoke as a woman—inasmuch as you considered the effect it would have upon Man. Where would be his courage? you asked. For a man's courage, you said, wiser than I, means his invention, his enterprise, his success, his desire of excellence. Man without the

fighting instinct, you said, being wiser in your instinct than I with my knowledge, would become like a woman: content to sit down and accept what is brought; or he would become like one of a horde of monkeys preying upon each other. That is what you said, Francesca."

"Yes, Emanuel, that is what I dared to say."

"I was too full of my own belief to pay much heed at first. But afterwards—afterwards—yes, I began to have doubts. Then you, Anthony, spoke in your turn. You said that my Discovery would do none of the things that I hoped for it. You said that it would either make War more terrible, or would lead to a more intolerable tyranny than any the world has ever seen. You said, also, that it would destroy all that is left of the Common Life—with Common action, discipline, and obedience—so that the rich would become ever richer and more tyrannical, and the poor feebler and more wretched; that is what you said, Anthony."

"That is pretty well the substance of what I said. I have thought more about it, and I think so still, but more strongly. We want the restoration of the Common, not the Individual Life. In Communities we may work out our salvation. We are just returning to the idea of the Community; and your unfortunate Invention, Emanuel, would arrive like a gift of Setebos the Troubler to make the Community impossible."

Emanuel turned to Harold. "You have not spoken, my friend. Well, I am going away. I leave this thing in your hands. I give it to you, Harold."

"You can no more give such a thing to me, Emanuel, than you can give me the wit and wisdom of your brain. No more than you can give me your eyes and the look that lies in them. It is yours—your very own—your child, whether a Devil or an Angel."

"Tell me, then, what you think. Speak. This child of mine—is it Devil or Angel?"

"Frankly, Devil. It will prove the worst Devil ever let loose upon an unfortunate world. I have been thinking of nothing else, I believe, since you revealed the thing. You thought that because you would make war inconceivably more terrible than ever you would make men more inclined for righteousness. That can only be the effect if men were ready for righteousness, which is, I take it, unselfishness. You judge the world by yourself,

Emanuel. Because you ardently desire this Return of the Golden Age you think that all men desire that happy time. I assure you that what most of us want is not the Golden Age at all, but as much as they can devour and more. And into this world you introduce a weapon which will give to every one—old and young, rich and poor, strong and weak, the power of unlimited destruction. Any man may destroy what he pleases, and as much as he pleases, to gratify his own greed or his rage or his malice. What a world—what a world it will be when this Devil is loose among us! Why, he will break up everything—Society, community, cities, industries, arts, science—everything. Men will drift apart—we shall resolve into the original elements, we shall live apart, suspicious, waiting every day to be killed by an invisible foe—ready to go forth and slay all around us for very safety!"

Emanuel groaned. "This is what I myself have learned. You are all right. And I, who thought myself so wise, am proved a Fool. This is the end of that great Dream. Well, Harold, it is yours. I give it to you. What will you do with it?"

"By your orders, what you choose. Without your orders, nothing; I will not take upon myself the awful responsibility of giving to the world this weapon of universal destruction. Nor will I place in the hands of even our own Government an instrument which could be turned to such purposes as this, not even for the sake—if the question should arise—of the national safety."

"A physical discovery," said Emanuel, "may be preparatory. Most great things have been arrived at by tentatives. If men are not ready for them, they are kept back. Many things were known concerning the powers of steam before it was made the slave of man; and of electricity before it was caught and trained and forced to work for man. For, you see, it was not until this century that men were prepared and ready for steam and electricity. And then these forces were tamed and pressed into our service. When the story of man comes to be written, it will be understood how certain qualities grew slowly in his brain while he was doing over and over again, from generation to generation, the same things in the same way, just as a boy writing exercises over and over again, and at last makes grammar a part of his brain. But that boy does not begin to write until the grammar is a part of his brain — so with man; he prepares — sometimes

for thousands of years—for the next great step. When it comes he is ready. My friends, I admit, sorrowfully, that the world is not yet ready for the abolition of war. And I confess with shame that my invention will not abolish war. We must not abandon war until we have learned to practise, without the aid of war, all the things which render war valuable—courage, enterprise, discipline, desire to excel—and have transferred them to the Life in Common. When all lives are spent in working for the good of all we shall be like the Monks who worked together in their Cloisters, all for the Brotherhood, not for wages, and gave their best to the Community, because they had no self to take it. The Brotherhood—yes. We shall form one great Brotherhood. That will be the greatest and the last of social schemes and experiments. Like all great things, it was discovered by our People—it came out of the Law and the Prophets—and the Christians in their monasteries only imitated the Essenes, who were Jews." He sighed heavily. "Alas! we are as yet far off. When this truth is accepted, my friends, war will cease naturally. Then, if my invention is discovered anew, it will only make that physically impossible which has already become morally impossible. Of all the evils of which we complain, war will be the last to vanish. The Prophet, I now perceive, spoke not of the sudden conversion of the universal human heart, but of the gradual change. Let us work our utmost for that gradual change for ourselves—ourselves."

"And—again—your Discovery, Emanuel?"

"The Discovery—I leave it in your hands, Harold. Destroy it—publish it—as you will. It is not mine, I repeat. Let me never hear any more about it."

"I must not destroy a scientific truth," replied the chemist. "I will preserve it. I will lock it up for the whole of my life, and I will leave it at my death as a secret gift to the President of the Royal Society. Will that be a reasonable compromise, Emanuel."

"As you will. I leave it in your hands. It is sufficient for me to understand and to confess that it is not what I hoped and believed. Not unto me is it given to change the course of this mighty river."

It was at this point, just where this history ends, that the other discovery—that for which Francesca had been sent to the house

—was made. In a most dramatic fashion, after all; for the two most concerned in it did not understand it, and it had to be explained to them. In order to account for the apparent stupidity of these two intelligent persons, remember that one had no suspicion or knowledge that he had a daughter at all, and that the other had been brought up in the belief that her father was dead. As for this discovery, the simplest accident in the world revealed it. So far, it was just as Clara had expected.

Harold it was who brought about this accident as follows.

"Very well," he said, "I will add within the packet a note stating that this paper was placed in my hands on the twentieth day of the month of June, 1893, by its discoverer, Emanuel—Emanuel—now I come to think of it—the very first time that I have thought of it. . . . I have never heard your surname, Emanuel."

"Have you not? It matters nothing. Among my friends I have but one name—Emanuel. When I was young, and belonged to Western Europe, they called me Emanuel Elveda."

"Elveda?" Francesca looked up astonished. "My own name?"

"Emanuel Elveda?" Harold repeated. Then the whole truth suddenly flashed upon him. He knew the story of the separation—the family story. He knew that the husband had been a man of science, a chemist of great promise, whose papers were in old Transactions; and that he had left his wife and gone away—perished in Morocco, it was thought. And he knew the miniature—Francesca's portrait of her father—and now he recognized the likeness, and, with the certainty that is surer than logic, and falls upon the mind with greater swiftness than follows the narration of facts, he knew the man before him. "Emanuel Elveda? You are Emanuel Elveda, come back again? Why, we thought you dead—dead—dead long ago! Francesca, this is Emanuel Elveda—Emanuel Elveda—"

"Yes, I am Emanuel Elveda. Why not? Why are you astonished?"

"Oh! He asks why I am astonished!"

Francesca looked up quietly.

"What is the matter? Is your name really Emanuel Elveda? Why, that is my name, too. My father was Elveda. We must be cousins."

"Cousins!" Harold repeated, scornfully and impatiently. "Has

no one got eyes but myself? Good Heaven! Emanuel—tell me, please—you once had a wife?"

"Certainly, I had once a wife."

"What was her name?"

"Her name was Isabel—Isabel Albu."

"Francesca! now do you understand. His wife's name was Isabel. This man—this wise man—this man we all love—why—he is your father—your own father—your father, Francesca!"

Francesca looked astonished, but was, so far, unmoved.

"You are quite wrong, Harold," she said, coldly. "My father is dead long ago. He died on a scientific expedition in Morocco."

"You are quite wrong, Harold," said Emanuel. "There are other Elvedas in the world, and other Albus. As for me, I have no daughter."

"Are there, then, two Emanuel Elvedas? Two chemists of that name? Two men of that name who separated from their wives? Two Isabels of that name who parted from their husbands? Are there two men with the same face? Francesca, you are blind—blind. Here is the very face of your miniature—twenty years older. I see—there is no doubt—now why I always thought I knew your face, Emanuel. Francesca," for the girl began to doubt and to tremble, "this is your father, I tell you. He is not dead. It must be."

"My father is dead." She was now trembling, and her face was white. "He died long, long ago, in Morocco. But, oh! I wish—"

"I have no child," said Emanuel. "I left my wife long ago. But—if it had been otherwise—I wish—"

"Tell me again, man!" cried Harold, impatiently; "are there two men of your name and your story? Are there—can there be—two women of that same name and that same story?"

"But—I have no child."

"My father left my mother a month after their marriage," Francesca explained. "He saw her a year later, when I was an infant. He was not told that I existed. He went away, and my mother heard afterwards that he was dead—it was said that he had died on a scientific expedition. I do not understand. I have always been told that my father was dead," she added, helplessly.

"Who is your mother, Francesca?" Harold persisted. "Tell us that. Where does she live?"

"She is Isabel Elveda, who has written on the Condition of Women, and she now lives in the Cromwell Road."

"In the Cromwell Road?" Emanuel asked. "Why, I have seen her. She is my wife! Francesca! Francesca!" he spread out his trembling hands as a blind man feels his way. "Francesca! Is this possible? Can I—even I, too—have a child?—and you—you? You are Isabel's child—and mine? I saw her a few days ago. Yet she told me nothing. My wife lives in the Cromwell Road. Your mother lives— What does this mean? I have no daughter. I cannot have a daughter. What does all this mean? Harold, you began it. Tell me what in means. I am growing childish. How can Francesca be my daughter?"

He looked around in helpless agitation and confusion.

At that moment a white figure appeared at the garden door and ran swiftly down the garden path. It was Clara, coming to clear up all before Emanuel vanished again into the country where there is no post and where nobody has an address.

"Clara!" cried Francesca, "tell me, if you can—tell me, far Heaven's sake, what this means!"

"We have just discovered," said Harold, briefly, "that Emanuel's name is Elveda."

"Oh! They have just found it out? I came here this evening on purpose to tell them. I have known it all along. Francesca, forgive me. I thought that if I brought you two together you would find out before very long the secret of your relationship, and I knew that whether the delay was long or short you would learn to love each other. But, to be sure, I thought it would be discovered in a day or two, or even in an hour or two. If you had been ordinary folk you would have found it out long ago. But your heads were up in the clouds—you never stooped to ask the simplest questions as to who and what you were—at home—as they say at school. Your heads were in the air; you were always talking of things too deep for ordinary mortals. So you have only just found it out."

"I don't understand yet," said Francesca.

"One moment. Tell me, dear, are you grateful to me for bringing you to know Emanuel?"

"Yes—yes, of course I am."

"Do you already respect and revere him? Do you sit at his feet and hear him?"

"He has been my Master. I have no words for the respect and veneration in which I hold him."

"Add love, then, to your veneration, for he is your father. Emanuel, are you willing to have a daughter?"

"I have never thought it possible that I should have a daughter."

"Yet you have one. That evening when you bade farewell to your wife this child was an infant three months old lying in a cradle. But you were not told. If you have any doubt, ask Melkah—the old Syrian woman. You remember Melkah? Look at this girl, and ask your own heart. Can you love this girl? Look at her face—is it not your own?"

Then Emanuel looked upon his daughter's face, and knew that she was his own child. And he lifted his hands solemnly to bless his daughter. But he spoke no word. And without a word Francesca fell into her father's embrace.

Clara touched Harold's hand, and they left the father and daughter together. "I was afraid," she said in the parlor, "that I should be too late. I only understood this evening that his departure was so near. Oh, if he had disappeared again without learning the truth! I should never have dared to tell Francesca. We knew it all along, because he came to father with a letter from a foreign correspondent. I don't know whether it was wisest to act as we did—I wanted Francesca to be influenced by him. I found out before she came here what a wonderful creature he is—I knew he would touch her imagination. We will go away and leave them for the night. They will have so much to say."

"You knew all along?"

"Yes. Oh, there is more! Madame Elveda is my cousin—that my father knew, but I did not. Our name is Albu, and her name was Albu. And now she has lost nearly all her money, poor lady! and she has lost her daughter, for Francesca will never take up Woman's Cause now, never—never—never! She will love her father too much. Mr. Alleyne, I'm sorry you've lost your peerage, but it is a wonderful thing for Nelly, isn't it? You will have for wife, after all, a Daughter of the Law obedient to the will of her husband. That is, of course, if Francesca—"

Harold smiled. Christians, before the wedding-bells ring, are only half-hearted about wishing the obedience of their wives.

"Provided," he said, "that she accepts in exchange"—to an Oriental like Clara the words were mere foolishness—"the service and the obedience of her lover."

A week later the same group were gathered together again in that little room. Francesca was in travelling costume, and her boxes were in the narrow passage outside. Emanuel's travelling costume remained the same as he had always worn, and his luggage consisted of a bag in which were his carving-tools and a few necessaries.

"Everything is ready, Francesca?" asked Harold. "Can I do nothing for you?"

"Nothing more, Harold, thank you. We are going right through to Beirut—from there I will write to you—and to Damascus next. There I will write again. After that we are going to join some Arab tribe and live awhile in the Desert."

"Have you seen your mother?"

"Yes, she is hard and bitter. She cannot forgive me, though she tried to say kind things. I have deserted her—and the Cause—oh, the Cause!" She shuddered. "She has lost her friends with her fortune. Except for Melkah, she is alone. Go and see her often, Harold. She will be very lonely."

"And you—you are happy, Francesca?"

"I am happier than I have ever been in all my life before. There is nothing in the world to live for but the life of nature and God's law. I have my father to study and to obey. It is such happiness as I never imagined. And all the world has grown so real—and I am in it, not outside it. The Passing Show has become part of the Eternal Drama in which I, too, play my humble part. I have my father and my cousins. I am no longer without kith and kin."

"Will you not acknowledge your lover as well?" he whispered.

"Yes—I have—you. What more can I want, or look to have? Let me, like Anthony, have the Common Lot! What better can there be than the Lot intended by the Lord for all?"

Harold started. Who had ever before heard from Francesca's lips a single word in the spirit of Faith?

"The Common Lot," said the Earl, who was with them. "I chose it and would not give it up, though the Countess has again

been fined twenty shillings and costs—for the usual offence. The Common Lot is best."

"We leave you." Emanuel looked about him. "I take my daughter—my Francesca"—his voice dropped like that of a lover when he names his mistress, and his eyes grew humid as he gazed upon her—"I take my daughter—my Francesca—to the Land of our Fathers. She shall see the ruins where her ancestor, the Prince of the Captivity, ruled for a thousand years, and she shall see the cities and mountains where another ancestor, a greater Prince, reigned for his allotted time and wrote his Psalms for all time. Then we will stay awhile—my Francesca with me—in the Desert. After a time she—my Francesca—will return to you; but as for me, I will return no more to the vast collections of bricks called the towns of Europe. I have been presumptuous. I thought it was given to me alone among men suddenly to change the mind of the world and to make them ready for the Reign of Peace. I must win my way back to humility by meditation and by silence. You shall have my daughter—my Francesca—back; but for me, I shall return no more."

"Francesca!" Harold took her hand. "Francesca, my Rose of Sharon!"

"Patience, Harold. Oh, dear friend"—she laid her other hand on Emanuel's shoulder—"suffer me to be with my father—my own father—a little longer. Oh, you cannot tell what a happiness it is to hear his voice, only to serve him and to obey him! A little longer, Harold! Then, if it please my Lord, and if his handmaiden still finds favor in his eyes—"

THE END